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INDEPENDENT YOUNG THINKERS



THE HIGH SCHOOL BOY—ON THE FENCE

INDEPENDENT YOUNG THINKERS

BY

W. RYLAND BOORMAN

Executive Secretary, Big Brother Association, Chicago

AND

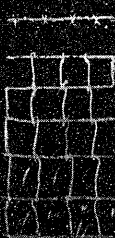
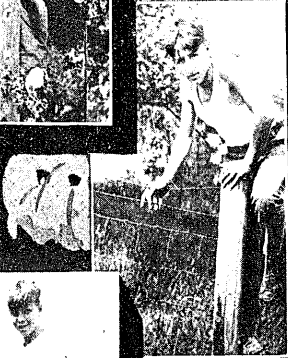
JAMES JOHNSTON

Youth Counselors, Chicago



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The Christopher Publishing House
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PREFACE

Five years ago, a group of older high school boys began the intellectual search around which this book has developed. James Johnston, then a high school senior, and later Editorial Chairman of the Staff of The Daily Cardinal at the University of Wisconsin, acted as the Recording Secretary. Later, with the assistance of the leader, W. Ryland Boorman, he revised the discussions. Other boys who shared definitely in this enterprise were: John Curry, Ross Drago, Henry Hoppe, Paul Koprowsky, Ted LeBaron, David Lundy, Norman Mayell, Carlton McNamer, Hugo Messerschmidt, Webster Stark, Morris Swadesh, Robert D. Taylor, and Allen Terrill.

Any group of older boys and girls can go on a similar intellectual adventure, guided by these materials, but following their own creative lines of thought. No group discussion goes as smoothly as these chapters would indicate. In fact, an entirely different set of questions may arise, depending on the age of the group, and a variety of conclusions are to be expected. Variations in thinking should be encouraged.

Specific references to all source materials, which are quoted, will be found in the bibliography, rather than as footnotes. Other helpful books are listed, as well.

The authors are especially indebted to Professor Elsie Michod, Philosophy Department, University of Chicago, for reading the manuscript and making valuable suggestions.

W. Ryland Boorman.

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PART I

YOUTH'S APPROACH TO THINKING

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear,
But of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

II Timothy 1:7.

Life Goes The Way Youth Finally Takes.
—*Herbert Hoover.*

INDEPENDENT YOUNG THINKERS

CHAPTER I

SOME ADVENTURES IN THINKING

Activity without reflection loses its grasp;
Meditation without action sinks into a dream.
—*Peabody.*

The ideal minus the material, lacks effectiveness,
The material minus the ideal, lacks direction.
—*Max Adler.*

Science has greatly increased our power of effecting the
lives of distant people,
Without increasing our sympathy for them.
—*Bertrand Russell.*

The gray-haired physician was reading his morning mail. A smile was mingled with a look of seriousness as he read:

“At times I wonder if, as a young man, you were as perplexed as I am to-day. Many of my friends seem to have lost all hope of solving this riddle of life. I think that is why some of them just dash about in their cars, stay out until all hours of the morning, and have a wild time. What’s the use of trying to think anyway?”

"When I see how easily science can ruin our civilization with its machine production, submarines, and poison gas, I am afraid of it. On the other hand, when I consider how religion has held back progress with its intolerance and dogmatism, many doubts arise in my mind. The more I've read this summer, the more my mind has become confused.

"Even in the quietness of the evening, when I'm alone, my mind seems to be a peculiar jumble of everything—without rhyme or reason—factories, jazz, books, churches, skyscrapers, war, sex, autos, athletics, high school, death, radio, astronomy—such a mixture! I'm not crazy, but I can't think straight.

"No, I'm not a pessimist—not yet—but I thought you might help a wandering soul."

The doctor folded the letter. He sat back in his easy chair and idly gazed out the window. The mental confusion among young people, which George had expressed, occupied his thoughts.

"Why not continue the correspondence as a quest—an intellectual adventure—rather than as 'friendly chatter?' he pondered. Then he jotted down some questions:

"Are you sure your classmates aren't as perplexed as yourself? What causes this jumble in your mind? How do others try to straighten it out?"

One Sunday, the following September, the Doctor was puttering around in his garden. George had just returned to the city to begin that most significant of all school experiences—his senior year. As soon as he

saw the Doctor, he ran over to the fence to pass a few remarks. His chums, Henry and Fred followed closely.

George: I guess you must have thought that I was a radical, the way I wrote to you last summer.

Doctor: No, letters are strangely interesting to me. We seem to express ourselves more frankly. We are not face to face when writing letters. That may account to some extent for the difference.

George: I had a lot of fun, though. You seemed to help me think through some of my vague notions, as well as to get my thinking better organized.

Doctor: Come over, if you've got the time. It will be more comfortable to sit in that shady arbor, especially if our discussions are going to "get warm." Henry and Fred can join us, too. We'll need their help.

As they walked across the garden and lawn, the conversation did not lag.

Doctor: Your letters were different this summer from a year ago. You seem to have put on "long pants" in your thinking.

George: Well, I had more time to read at the hotel, for business was slack.

Henry: I read quite a bit this summer, too. I borrowed some books from the library. My uncle, on the farm, said I shouldn't read too much about science, because it wrecks a person's religion. But I told him that science and religion were perfectly harmonious.

Doctor: Are you sure they are harmonious?

Henry: Why yes, I'm pretty sure. I don't see any conflicts.

Fred: Well, I do! To me they're like a cat and a dog, always clawing at each others' throats. The scientist is forever brandishing his microscopes in the face of religion, and the minister shakes his Bible and denounces evolution. One says, "I know. I saw it in the laboratory." The other says, "You're wrong! The Bible says thus and so."

Henry: Is it as bad as all that?

Doctor: Not quite, I would say, but these points are worth further investigation. There is considerable conflict even within the church itself on this subject of science. Certain modern preachers are criticised because their sermons savor of strange gases and smell of the laboratory. These ministers are as apt to quote some scientist as to refer to the Bible. They express the scientific point of view in their thinking. Conservative ministers think these liberals are in danger of selling out to science.

Fred: Say what you like, I'm all for science. I like my chemistry. It gives me an idea as to what the world is like. I'd rather know what it is that I am standing on now, than to dream that the streets of heaven are paved with gold. And I know I'm going to enjoy physics this coming year. It's much more interesting to study electricity than to sing hymns. Science has been fascinating to me since I was a kid.

George: Well, what are you interested in now, the care and feeding of babies?

Doctor: Come on, let's get back to the subject.

Science has discovered for us a world which is vastly different from the one in which Moses lived, and science has conquered many of the foes that cornered the Stone Age man. When we think of the accomplishments of scientific investigation, we note that distance has been overcome in scores of ways. The automobile, airplane, steam engine, and Zeppelin have each contributed their share. Darkness has been subdued by electricity. Heat is being combated by refrigeration; cold by scientific means of heating. The telegraph, telephone, and radio have sharpened our eardrums; the telescope and microscope have multiplied our power of sight. All of this has so changed the world that London, New York, Berlin and Tokyo now find themselves in one little neighborhood. Science has done plenty to improve humanity.

Fred: I read a book this summer which described the ideas of people in the Middle Ages, before science got going. People were foolish enough to believe that our brains were in our stomach. At the cry of leprosy—"Unclean"—these ignorant folks would scamper to their homes, thinking the afflicted one was visited with a curse from God. They were taught that the earth was the center of the universe and that it was flat instead of round. God ruled the world according to His own whims and caprices. He could inflict plagues, work miracles, and make it to rain at will. No wonder the sailors were awed by the horrors of the Atlantic. "Ne plus untra," which means "Go no farther," they would say, and confine their ships to the Mediterranean Sea. I'm glad I didn't live

then, or I might have believed this foolish stuff, too.

Doctor: Little by little, however, before the days of Copernicus (1473-1543) and Francis Bacon (1561-1626), and very rapidly since, the shackles of ignorance have been thrown off. Columbus dared to sail "beyond the gates of Hercules" to discover the other half of the world; Galileo propounded his theories on physics; Descartes experimented in the realm of mathematics; and Harvey began to cut into the human body to see what was there. What a great house-cleaning in knowledge there was! Many of the old cherished dogmas were swept out of existence.

Fred: It's great the way science has lifted the mystic curtain and permitted us to know the truth more completely. No wonder science is more interesting to young people to-day than religion!

Henry: But all this doesn't disprove my view. Science and religion are not always at odds. Religious leaders favor the advances which science has made.

Fred: Oh, yeah!

Doctor: Let's not jump at conclusions too readily, or look at only one side of the question. What is there to be said for religion? What is the difference between science and religion?

George: Last year a high school teacher said: "The techniques of science can build an automobile, but science, as such, is not interested in whether that automobile is used to hold up a bank, or to take a family on a picnic."

Doctor: And what did he mean by that?

George: Of course, science is not vicious in pur-

pose. It has made many valuable contributions to humanity, as you have suggested, but science, as such, is not in search for the good in contrast to the bad.

Doctor: I guess that if science and religion fight, it is because people have the wrong idea of both.

Henry: What are the right ideas?

Doctor: You should find out for yourselves, but this time I will help you a little. Science is disinterested when it comes to any consideration of the application of its findings to the welfare of humanity.

George: I don't get that point. Science searches for cures for a disease in order to benefit humanity, doesn't it?

Doctor: Let me illustrate the difference. Science discovers a gas, but it does not determine whether the gas is used in warfare to kill soldiers, or if it is used in drinking water to prevent contagious diseases. As soon as the results of scientific research are discussed in terms of good or bad, helpful or harmful to humanity, then we step out of the realm of pure science and begin to discuss ethics, religion, or philosophy.

They say that science is objective, rational, and based on cold facts. It demands proof for every hypothesis, reasons from cause to effect, and tries to state laws. Religion, on the other hand, concerns itself with human motives, the quest of beauty, truth and goodness. It is emotional in nature, friendly, helpful, and co-operative in spirit.

So we say that religion interprets life in terms of values, mind, spirit, purpose, and God. Science

analyzes life in terms of atoms, gravity, resistance, and cosmos.

George: It looks to me as though we need both science and religion.

Doctor: Yes, science can never hope to take the place of art and religion, because science approaches every aspect of reality through its several parts, whereas art and religion deal with life as a whole—in its unity.

We need both. When religion proceeds in isolation of reason and scientific data, man is taken back to the gloomy civilization of the Middle Ages. Pestilence, poverty, or natural catastrophies are explained as acts of God to punish sinful people. Religion used to account for such events as acts of a vengeful God. Furthermore, to prove the worth of religion, as some people do, by a belief in miracles—that the sky opened and a voice spoke, or that a certain prophet flew off into the sky—seems unreasonable and unnecessary. Religion in isolation of science may result in a blind faith, devoid of intelligence.

On the other hand, science without religion may imperil humanity. A scientific education tends to give young people material power and knowledge without the necessary control and guidance for its best use. A college trained man may go out and use his scientific learning to exploit his fellowmen. Science has done much to drive out superstition and ignorance, but no scientist ever created power. At most he has experimented to see how it works, or demonstrated how it can be harnessed.

Fred: "You've said a mouthful." But, in spite of all your remarks, religion is vague and hard to define, while science is concrete and more definite. At least, that's the way I look at it.

Doctor: To that I would say, a person should be clear and precise in his religious thinking, although I recognize the difficulty you mention. It is most difficult to define God. It is better to define pathways which lead to God, thus leaving the goal at the end of the road indefinite. Or, we can use symbols by saying that God is like a father, Christ, or a fortress.

Furthermore, regarding this point of vagueness, it is well to remember that science is using an indefinite terminology, such as "energy," "fields of force," and "relativity," more and more. Since the days when the universe was defined with exactness, and the earth was flat, science has moved farther and farther into the realm of indefiniteness. Sir James Jeans says, "The ultimate realities of the universe are at present quite beyond the reach of science, and may be—and probably are—forever beyond the comprehension of the human mind." Science has sacrificed its ideas of hard, round atoms in recent years.

If I wanted to be sarcastic, I might say that it takes great minds to comprehend the modern views of either science or religion, because only folks with limited mental capacity demand that life be reduced to simple A. B. C's.

George: That is a mean crack. Say! why can't we have another discussion like this sometime?

Fred: I'm ready to start anytime.

Doctor: We can't settle all these problems in a day. It may take several months this Autumn and Winter.

Henry: That's all right with me.

Doctor: If we are to go into a further discussion of science, we must get away from the popular view of its contributions toward invention, or sensational information about the universe. We should seek to understand science as a method of thinking. Nor should we think of religion in its sectarian forms. If possible, we should pick up ideas about science and religion from reading, and by asking people questions.

The boys hesitated to leave. With some young people, Sunday afternoons prove long and weary, but George, Fred, and Henry had discovered a solution to this problem. Their first Sunday afternoon with the Doctor had passed all too quickly.

When the Doctor went into the house, his wife inquired as to what the argument had been about.

"Oh, I've got some patients with mental growing pains. I'm going to administer some treatments for the next few weeks."

"I never saw boys who were such good pals, and yet so different," commented the Doctor's wife, as she watched them passing the football back and forth in the yard.

"Many times I think opposites attract each other," added the Doctor by way of explanation. "Fred is decidedly intellectual and scientific in his thinking. Nature has not blessed him with a large frame, nor

especially good looks. He's not bashful, nor a 'hail-fellow-well-met,' as far as I can see. I've heard George say, 'I wish I had half of Fred's brains.' "

"You can see that George is an athlete by the way he handles the football," continued the Doctor's wife.

"Yes, he's the athletic or motor-minded type, and Fred's the literary type. Henry is quite as different, due to his conservative religious training. This makes him somewhat of a misfit in this group of liberals. However, he needs the influence of their association, and at the same time he'll prove something of a balance for them."



PART II

THE NATURE OF SCIENCE

If God were to offer me in one hand, Truth,
And in the other, the Search for Truth,
I would take the Search for Truth.

—*Lessing.*

CHAPTER II

SCIENCE, AN EXPERIMENTAL ATTITUDE

To live is to change;
To be perfect is to change often.

—*J. H. Newman.*

It is fear that holds men back;
Fear that their cherished beliefs should prove harmful,
Fear lest they themselves should prove less worthy of
respect

Than they have supposed themselves to be.

—*Bertrand Russell.*

The boys were guests of the Doctor at dinner the next Sunday. They came all primed for a good meal and plenty of mental gymnastics. While at the table the Doctor's grandson, a lad of eight, caused his philosophic grandad to swallow some water the wrong way by asking, out of a clear sky, "Grandpa, where does a person go when he dies?"

"Why-uh, to-ah, most people say to heaven, others are not sure."

The Doctor thought he had the question answered, but not two minutes later the little lad chirped up again, "Well, why doesn't someone kill himself and find out for sure where we go?"

After recovering from another coughing spell, the

Doctor tried to say with finality, "There are some things we do not experiment with, and death is one of them. When a person dies, he cannot return."

"But our Sunday School teacher said that Lazarus was raised from the dead," persisted the child. This comment brought a ripple of laughter from the boys, and the Doctor changed the subject.

After dinner the group retired to the living-room to "talk it over."

Doctor: That was a sticker of a question the boy asked me wasn't it? The little rascal insists on an answer, too. Usually, I try to give him some kind of an answer, if I can think of one.

Henry: It was his suggestion of suicide that shocked me. What wild things people will do now-a-days just to experiment.

Fred: But, experimentation is one of the basic elements in modern scientific thinking, isn't it? Think how weak scientific thinking was before the days of Francis Bacon, one of the early advocates of free experimentation.

Doctor: You are correct in saying that experimentation is basic to science, but, I would suggest the word "controlled," rather than "free" experimentation. The whole problem grows out of just what we mean by experimentation.

George: I've noticed little children experiment. My kid brother got burned on the radiator last week while creeping around experimenting. I've watched him play with a toy. He will push it and pull it; then

throw it somewhere; and, after finding it again, nine times out of ten he'll stick it in his mouth.

Doctor: That's the way he learns. He's curious, I suppose. Experimentation starts with curiosity.

Henry: I dare say that experimentation gets him into plenty of trouble, too. Curiosity killed a cat, you know. I'm not sure experimentation is such a good thing, even for older people. It can be carried too far.

George: Still, this idle play of babies couldn't be classed as scientific inquiry, could it?

Fred: No, that would make you a great scientist!

Doctor: Wise cracks like that are ruled out. It may be that many scientific discoveries have been hit upon in somewhat the same accidental way. Likely the cave man, while "monkeying around," as we would say, discovered the lever principle.

Fred: Oh, yes, I'll admit that, but the fact remains that it is pretty primitive to be classed as scientific experimentation.

Doctor: Have you ever thought of the relation between this experimental element in scientific thinking and the experimental attitude of young people?

George: Sure, I can see that young people like to experiment. I experiment with some of my teachers to see what happens. And I have known young fellows who experiment around with different summer jobs, but is this a scientific attitude?

Fred: I suppose you think a person has to write up the experiment as we do in physics! I heard of a fellow who got several bottles of whiskey. Then,

he went to his room, started to drink, sat down to the typewriter and kept writing down just what was happening to him. How's that for an experiment?

Doctor: Are these young people any different from Pasteur and Lister as experimenters? These men set out to discover the ravages of bacteria by the experimental method. Likewise, the Roman Catholic monk, Gregor Mendel, discovered the laws of heredity in about the same way, didn't he?

Henry: You may be right. Science is great fun. It "fiddles around," and is as curious as a child, sticking its nose into everything, and always discovering something new. It's a wonder science doesn't get itself into more trouble. I think, however, young folks carry it too far, and so do many scientists.

Fred: Your view is about as extreme as the wildest experiments of some young people. Even though a farmer has only gone to grade school, when he uses the experimental method in raising potatoes, he is on the way to becoming something of a scientist. The same could be said of young people, who go a step beyond idle experimentation and seek to make discoveries about life—teachers, jobs, games, or friendships.

George: But religious people are opposed to experimenting around, aren't they?

Doctor: Perhaps we must admit that. If the experiment conflicts with certain ideals or teachings, they oppose it. On the other hand some religious leaders have not forgotten that the Bible is a story of a great quest to discover God's will for mankind.

The adventure was initiated by Abraham and carried forward by the Prophets. (What a romantic tale of adventure and experimentation it was!) True enough, scepticism was condemned by the Prophets, and yet, their faith was that of an explorer. To-day the faith of many conservative religious leaders is little more than the acceptance and confidence in a carefully worked out system of beliefs.

George: My parents, and lots of older people I know, are opposed to this idea of experimentation, too. Mother thinks I'll get hurt and father says I'll get into trouble. Can you imagine that?

Doctor: Older folks have experienced periods of grief, disappointment, and suffering. They have felt the crush of defeat, as well as the exaltation of victory. Old age has made its mistakes—and paid for them. They have battled to make their schools, their business, and their country worthy of support. They are proud of their achievements. "Play safe" is the warning of the older generation to the young people of to-day. To older people, progress is the result of learning from past successes and failures, and, not by reckless experimentation.

Fred: Is it "safe" men that the world needs, men who will startle no one, or creative thinkers and aggressive experimenters?

George: One of the boys told me not long ago that everything he did, right or wrong, he considered a part of his training for life. He says he wants to be able to tell his own boy, when he has one, what's wrong and what's right, not by just saying so, but be-

cause of his own experiences. He went on to say that I might consider him something of a gambler and a "booze-hound," but he was not that. He'd never been drunk more than twice, and then he did it, not for the purpose of having a good time, but to have the experience.

Henry: The trouble with that fellow is that his own son will insist on the right to "find out for himself"—the same as his father.

Fred: You bet! Show me the fellow who doesn't want to learn for himself, who isn't afraid to take a chance, even get his fingers scorched, if necessary. You can learn a thing twice as well from experience as you can from books.

Doctor: Perhaps experimentation, even scientific experimentation, can be carried too far. Does a child have to burn his fingers to learn that fire is hot? Do you have to eat spoiled food to understand the effects of ptomaine poisoning?

Fred: But many scientists have risked their lives to discover the effect of a serum, or in exploring an out-of-the-way land.

Doctor: "Finding out" is one of the most inviting aspects of science. To follow the clues of one's own curiosity is playing an exciting game with endless possibilities. It's a good way to keep from growing old. Not only is the experimental attitude loads of fun, but it is essential to human progress. The story of mankind could be related as a ballad of a knight on a great quest, first exploring one field, then another;

now looking into a cave here, or investigating a path in the direction of the mountains.

Fred: That's right! Parents and ministers may scorn experimentation, but their preachings against it will be useless. People, with active minds, can't resist experimentation.

Doctor: Experimentation finds expression among young people in just as many good fields, as bad. I know many folks who go on an adventure through books, experiment in making helpful friendships, or discover new values in recreation. I'm not overlooking the interest of some young people in degrading experiences. There is something fascinating about peering behind hidden doors.

Henry: This is all well and good, but still I don't know if experimentation is good or bad. You seem to think it is pretty good.

George: I think it is good, if it isn't carried too far. And still I can't say what I mean by "too far." I'll have to think some more about it.

Doctor: Be careful of those words "good" and "bad," when you talk of scientific experimenting. Science is not interested in good or bad experiments, primarily, but, in any experiments which will increase accurate knowledge about life. Its goal is truth, not goodness.

George: Let's call it an afternoon. My head's beginning to swim.

Fred: Yes, and besides I've got some physics to experiment with.

Doctor: Somewhere I've read an article which

advocates an entire year of free adventure and experimentation for older boys, and even girls. The year might follow graduation from high school, or the freshmen year in college. The boy is to go away from home, with expenses paid, or even to earn part of his way, and do as he pleases for a year. What would you think of that?

Fred: Great! I'd like that, even if I did not have plenty of money to cover my expenses. I'd be willing to work part of my way for a chance like that.

Henry: I still think experiments, even like that, may be good or bad.

Doctor: Under what conditions would such an experiment be scientific?

George: Aw, let's talk about that next time!

CHAPTER III

SCIENCE, THE FACTUAL ATTITUDE

Aspire to know all things;
The limits will appear soon enough.
—*W. Renan.*

Answer with facts, not arguments.
—*Abraham Lincoln.*

It is not through facts but through ideas that Utopia will be achieved.

Upon proper balance of fact and idea depends eventual escape.

—*Robert Maynard Hutchins.*

Fred was pleased to meet the Doctor on the street one evening during the week.

"I've been wanting to see you," continued Fred, after their greeting. "Many times debates arise among us boys on such simple matters as how much a certain make of auto costs, the batting average of Babe Ruth, or if the leaves are still green in the park. In such a situation, I make a simple statement of fact, according to what I have read or seen. Not so with my companions. They will swear positively that such and such is the case. They know! The final argument, if I persist, is 'Bet you a dollar.' Now in our home, where wealth doesn't flow freely, a dollar is a

great deal. To me, anyone who will put up a dollar is certainly sure of himself, positive of his assertion. I begin to doubt my own memory.

"Lately, I am beginning to realize that a person can maintain that an airplane can go a thousand miles an hour, in all good faith, and still be wrong. I suppose it appears dumb of me, but I must admit that it has taken several years to learn that feeling certain does not make a man right. The point is this: I have found in science a realm where truth is truth, and neither mistaken certainty, nor loud debate can tip the scales one way or the other. Science sticks to the facts. That is why it appeals to me."

"Your experience is very common," added the Doctor. "I remember when I almost worshipped at the throne of science. I tended to take everything that bore the earmarks of science, as being scientific. For instance, I took quite seriously newspaper articles which read, 'Science Discovers Love Is An Incurable Disease' and other forms of pseudo-science. I spent one entire summer studying a book on palmistry, thinking I was learning something scientific, simply because the introduction set forth the material in a quasi-scientific form. There is a great deal of ignorant use of the phrase, 'I can prove it by science.' A lot of people are blinded by it."

"Will you discuss this aspect of science with us next Sunday?" continued Fred.

The Doctor had not forgotten this discussion with Fred, as the group piled into his auto, prepared to spend the day at his cottage. Even as they motored

along the open highway, arguments arose about college, business conditions, and politics, just as Fred had mentioned the previous week, when talking with the Doctor. During a lull in the conversation, the Doctor said, "Suppose we found a man in the middle of the road, seemingly dead. What would be the scientific method of finding out whether he was dead and what caused his death?"

Henry: I'm sure Fred would want to pull his wings off, like he does to a grasshopper. He'd want to dissect him.

Doctor: No fooling, what would you do?

George: We'd get out and walk over to give the body closer inspection. We'd see if there was an odor of liquor, and we'd feel his pulse. In that way we would discover sooner or later that he was dead.

Doctor: That is, you would gather *facts*, and arrive at a *conclusion* based on those facts.

Fred: We might try to discover the cause of his death. A number of *hypotheses* might be proposed. I might say that the man had been struck by an auto, you might say that he had been shot, and a third might add that he had died of heart failure.

Doctor: Then what would you do?

George: I'd call a doctor, and let him decide.

Doctor: But, if you were as curious as our last discussion indicated, what might you do while waiting?

Fred: A person with a real scientific attitude would not accept any of these *theories* as to the man's death. Nor would he try to prove one theory in contrast to the rest. He would gather more facts by

looking for bruises, bullet holes, and additional data.

Doctor: When the doctor arrived, let us assume that he found no additional information by external examination. In time he might perform an autopsy. If, after finding no evidence of poisoning in the stomach, he would abandon the theory of suicide. But, additional facts revealed a blood clot on the brain. This fact, together with a consideration of the age of the man, would lead to the conclusion that he had died of apoplexy.

Henry: We wouldn't know that this expert was correct though, for we wouldn't be able to follow his line of investigation. The chances are, however, that we would accept his conclusions and theories, because he was an authority. We can't get far without authorities.

Fred: I'd say you were wrong. We'd accept his conclusion, because he was trained in the scientific method and used it.

Doctor: That's it! Science faces the facts. Just as you boys pointed out the relationship between facts, data, conclusions and theories, so also the Doctor proceeded, only in a little more advanced way.

George: Can this method be used to advantage when applied to the daily problems of young people, such as selecting the right vocation, determining what college to attend, or in choosing between one religion and another?

Doctor: Absolutely! If you define your problem, start with an open mind, then proceed to gather all the facts available, and arrive at such conclusions as

the facts warrant. Then you are using the scientific method, no matter what the problem. And remember, you cannot stick blindly to your conclusions, either. New data compels you to alter your theories and conclusions from time to time.

Henry: In a way this scientific method sounds good to me, but still I'm not entirely sold.

Doctor: What are the difficulties with it?

George: Our social science teacher asked us to work on a paper dealing with prohibition. What a sweet job! I got all tangled up. I doubt if I could have gotten very far in a year's time. I wasn't sure what the facts were, and there were so many that I couldn't tell which to use.

Doctor: Something of this same trouble arises in the study of all social problems—war, crime, unemployment, or poverty. The life of each generation is short. We cannot wait until the facts can be gathered and correlated. Some people say we must reason according to certain principles and lay plans accordingly.

Fred: I hope you are not opposed to gathering facts?

Doctor: No, not at all. Gather all the facts available, but, even when all of the facts are gathered, say on crime, each scientist gives a different interpretation to them, or a different degree of importance to certain facts, depending on whether he is a biologist, psychologist, or sociologist. Those who are fact-finders frequently give the impression, that cold, hard facts lie around like pebbles on the beach. The prob-

lem is merely a matter of gathering and counting the facts. Of course, this is not the case.

George: Perhaps, I'm not any too bright, but I've found difficulty in seeing the facts which the teacher talks about in biology class. I just seem to have to learn what the teacher says, at times, and believe it. I don't see it all in the microscope. I just don't get mine focused right, I guess.

Doctor: Furthermore, just to gather facts and more facts, without determining what they mean, or without arriving at some theories is a fruitless task and gets nowhere. Psychologists hold several divergent theories as to how we see color even though they all possess the same facts. Anthropologists give different theories about the origin of languages, and biologists explain differently why sap flows to the top of a tree. Frequently, I can tell what teacher a student has studied under at Columbia and Harvard by the theories he propounds.

Fred: But you said you weren't opposed to fact-finding?

Doctor: Certainly not, but we must not be blinded by facts either. It is more apt to be an amateur scientist who shows this bias, when he thinks he is standing on the firm foundation of a few facts. To him, facts are pretty sacred.

Henry: Aren't there some things which can't be proven, some problems which are dataless?

Doctor: There are. And when a person refuses to believe a theory, because the facts are insufficient in his estimation, he is called an agnostic. He is not

necessarily an atheist, or a non-believer in God. Many scientists, in fact, even though they do not accept all of the teachings of the Bible, or the Church, are active in religious organizations and recognize the need of religion in society.

Fred: The trouble with so many religious people is that they hold antiquated views and refuse to modify their religious views in the light of new facts. That is why so many young people have left the church. They prefer the sensible, scientific view. They want proof for what they believe.

Henry: I've noticed that many people readily accept the positive assertions of politicians. It has been said that assertions without proof are the strongest arguments to the great majority. Perhaps the ministers are in a strong position after all.

Doctor: There is something to be said against an extreme scientific training for young people, from a religious angle. Science encourages young people to give up many beliefs which religion teaches, without giving them anything in their place. The result is that young people cast aside their belief, say in miracles, and in so doing they tend to discredit religion in general.

Henry: That's why I stick to religion, and only dabble in science.

Doctor: From another viewpoint, we might say that science makes it easy for us to comprehend that which we can touch, so we are attracted to it in contrast to appreciating the more intangible things of life, the elevating inner experiences, and the spiritual

things of life. Many scientifically trained men tend to condemn all inspiration, as mystical, metaphysical, and unreal. No wonder religion is forced to turn its guns on science in self protection. Science has not given us any better poetry, art, or music. And, is all of our life made up of the things we can weigh and measure?

Fred: I'm interested in your points. I had not thought of them before, but still I like to stick to the facts.

Doctor: Good, I feel the same way about it.

The group was almost out to the lake, so the discussion closed rather abruptly. They had to start a fire in the kitchen stove, gather wood, and prepare for a good time. Henry picked up a magazine and began reading. He shouted jubilantly and made so much fuss that the others couldn't imagine what the trouble was. They tried to grab the magazine away from him, until in self-protection he promised he had something good in store for them right after they had eaten. An hour later, while the group lounged around the fireplace, Henry got out the treasure.

Henry: Here is the treasure I found. It is an article by Salvador de Madariaga, Spanish Minister to the United States. It's good. He thinks Americans are nothing but a lot of children continually crying for information—facts, to be more specific. With facts, they are able to build skyscrapers, airplanes, and all other "toys" they like to play with.

"There is a mighty boy in Columbia University,"

he says, "Who is a master at the game. He's just discovered how blonde girls are more sensitive than brunettes by showing them love films, while they had all sorts of something-meters and what-do-you-call-them graphs attached to their wrists and placed on their breasts. Great fun, I tell you, this fact-finding game.

"Do they take these facts, which they are finding by the bushel, and put them together so as to reach some principles? In other words, do they like to think? Not a bit of it! Why think when you can juggle a little bit of knowledge about engines and produce an automobile which will go ninety miles an hour? The facts are entertaining enough; why bother about principles?"

Fred: He's "all wet." He doesn't know what he is talking about.

Doctor: Let's see. He may have something worth considering. Perhaps I can summarize our entire discussion this afternoon and suggest a partial reason for his criticism of the way Americans are taught to think. Let me put it this way: The outstanding Greek philosophers were charmed by ideas, rather than facts, although they were not blind to what facts they had or could get. Their method of thinking was to start with some general principle, such as "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and, by steps of logic, descend to reality, or the practical application of the idea. They would ask: What does the principle "Love thy neighbor as thyself" mean? It means men should not cheat each other, or covet what does not belong to them; it means men should not take up arms against another.

They would then compare the ideal with the reality or conditions as they existed. This is the deductive method of thinking, and in philosophy, it is called the school of *Rationalism*.

Now in contrast to this method of Rationalism is the scientific method which starts on the ground with reality, with facts. On the basis of all the available facts, the scientific method of logic, the inductive method, builds up and up, until it arrives at certain generalizations and conclusions. Philosophers give the name of *Empiricism* to this method of thinking. This is the difference which this magazine article is pointing out—in a rather critical way.

Because of the scientific emphasis in our education, and the fact that this is a relatively new country without many traditions, we can imagine how Salvadore de Madariaga may be right when he suggests that Americans are satisfied to play around with temporary shifting facts. They do not think as often as they should in terms of the fundamental truths of life.

Henry: Religious people think in terms of general truths, don't they?

Doctor: Well, that's hard to say, although there is a tendency in that direction. But even people who go to church are inclined to see the facts under the microscope and, marveling at them, fail to think of their relation to life in its totality. A senior in an Eastern university summed up the weakness of our education by saying, "I could not organize the university in my mind well enough to adopt any one facet

of it . . . It was impossible for me to put unity into my four years' struggle."

Henry: Would you say that religion was based on deductive logic, as contrasted with science?

Doctor: Before I answer that, let me say that deductive logic is more interested in the meaning of facts, and relates them to the whole of life.

Historically speaking, religion comes from above, from God. Therefore, religious thinkers went in quest of God's will for humanity. Or, Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God on earth, and we, in trying to apply this principle of social life, use the deductive method.

However, in the field of religious education to-day, the empirical method is coming "into vogue." That is why they build around practical programs and the discussion of everyday problems. Young people demand this and respond to it. One religious group, The Humanists, go so far that they do not need God in their religious beliefs. Empirical thinking, in the realm of religion, results in confusion, without a doubt.

Fred: Are you a Rationalist or an Empiricist in your thinking? (I can hardly pronounce those words.)

Doctor: Well, that's a secret. See if you can discover as we go along.

CHAPTER IV

SCIENCE, A CRITICAL AND OPEN-MINDED ATTITUDE

A slave is he who cannot speak his thoughts.
—*Euripides.*

"Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere,

We believe that the State University of Wisconsin should ever encourage the continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone truth can be found."

Science starts with curiosity,
Steps forward by observation and experimentation,
And its goal should be the full grasp of truth.
—*Masaharu Anesaki.*

One Sunday George telephoned the Doctor to ask if he might bring a "lady's man" with him. The Doctor said that it was all right as far as he was concerned and suggested that George get the consent of one of the other boys. When the group arrived, George introduced the new-comer by saying, "Our discussions may be too deep for Clyde, but he can go to sleep, if he wishes, and make up for the sleep he lost at a Saturday night party."

Clyde seemed a bit embarrassed. After some light conversation, because of the new member, Fred started the discussion.

Fred: To-day I was watching my little brother draw pictures of what he saw from the window in our living room. I was amused with the results. The man on the sidewalk was as large as the telephone pole nearby, and the apartment house across the street had only one window. I tried to point out some of the mistakes. Imagine my surprise, when my father overheard our conversation, and said, "Relatively speaking, the mind of the average adult is just about as distorted and inaccurate in its conceptions of life, as is this picture." Do you believe that?

Doctor: That is a new slant on things, but, we may have to admit that the great mass of people like the movie-ideas of life. They flock to see society pictures, western films, and the college play that is grossly distorted.

Henry: Yes, I've seen these rah-rah movies, where the students seem to have nothing else to do but play football and buy sodas for co-eds. Fraternity houses are big, well-kept mansions, and the students are always well-dressed, jolly good fellows. The whole college turns out for pep meetings and football games. It's just rah-rah-rah old Onionpatch.

Fred: The more I think of it, the more I can see how easy it is for our ideas to become distorted. We make "tin gods" out of our heroes. We think of our heroes as though they were all good. We praise them to the sky and overlook their faults. Imagine what people would say if newspapers printed how inaccurate George Washington was as a surveyor, or revealed the private life of Alexander Hamilton.

Clyde: Time and again our newspapers spread half truths and false information about the Chinese, Russian, or South American people. And the worst of it is that we believe this propaganda.

Fred: We smile at the folks of a century ago, who believed that the earth was a flat block, or think it strange that respectable New England citizens once looked upon friendless, old women as witches. True enough, we have corrected some of these ancient fallacies, but we must recognize our own shortcomings. I guess father was right that time.

Clyde: Lots of times I try to argue with people about these exaggerations of the movies, newspaper stories, and stuff like that, but what good does that do, if people will be that way?

Doctor: Part of the trouble is, that in a debate or argument each person takes one side of the issue, advances what facts he can to prove his side is right, and then fights for his position to the bitter end, even though, at times, he is convinced that he is on the wrong side. The method of debating is somewhat opposed to the scientific spirit of inquiry. The scientist gathers all the facts, pro and con, which are available on the subject under investigation. Then he is broad-minded enough not to care which side comes out victorious.

George: Do scientists distort their information like the movies or the newspapers?

Fred: No, because their purpose is different. The movie must make life interesting, newspapers think they must spread propaganda in order to form public

opinion, but science seeks the plain unvarnished truth.

Henry: To hear Fred tell about it, science is just about perfect.

Doctor: For the benefit of Clyde, perhaps I should say that we have been discussing the fact that the scientific method tries to free itself from any emotional bias. The spirit of science starts with an open-minded attitude. It is fearless and critical in dealing with all the facts available. Then it holds to its conclusions tentatively, and willingly readjusts its views in the light of additional data. The scientific emphasis in education is on *how* to think, rather than on *what* to think.

Thus it is that science knows no "sacred cows" in its criticism. Any theory, no matter how serene or true it seems, or who propounded it, must undergo the test.

Henry: Nevertheless, I don't know as I am enthusiastic about the scientific attitude in its extreme forms. Why does science always have to be finding fault?

Fred: It isn't finding fault just for the sake of finding fault. It is critical in order to guard against believing only in that which "looks good," or what some authority claims to be true.

George: If we admit that the mass of people "fall" for distorted views of life in spite of the scientific emphasis in our educational system, is there any hope for the future?

Doctor: Most people don't realize that they are prejudiced. They see the narrow-mindedness of other

people, but they are blind to their own shortcomings.

Fred: Then, too, it seems that many people dislike the mental discomfort which accompanies any changes in their cherished beliefs. They refuse to consider new truths. They prefer to remain secure in the darkness of their dogmatism, even if they are wrong.

Doctor: And college educated people are like that, too.

Fred: I guess we will have to start with little children, if we are to correct this difficulty in modern thinking. Let's forget about the old folks.

Doctor: Still the task is not easy. Even with the child, we are handicapped by the emotional factor in human nature. Just to grow up in a family produces prejudices regarding hard labor, black folks, socialism, war, education and labor unions, even though no direct attempt is made by the social group to indoctrinate the child.

Fred: Religious teachings are at the root of a lot of bias. I'm in favor of parents letting children grow up with no religious training, until they are old enough to think and to choose for themselves.

Henry: That is about as wise as refusing to expose children to a language until they are adults, and then expect them to choose between English or Chinese at that time. To swing from one extreme to the other isn't so "hot" either.

Doctor: We mustn't blame all our difficulty on religion.

Fred: Then why does the church hold so many

realms as holy and above question? Why is it wrong to study the Bible critically? Why was Spinoza ostracised for his critical ideas? Once he wrote: "Those who wish to seek out the causes of miracles, and to understand the things of nature as philosophers, and not to stare at them in astonishment like fools, are soon considered heretical and impious, and proclaimed as such by those whom the mob adore as the interpreters of nature and the gods. For these men know that once ignorance is put aside, that wonderment which is the only means by which their authority is preserved would be taken away."

Henry: Things have changed a good deal since the time of Spinoza. The trouble is that science abuses its privilege. This critical attitude produces doubters. Religion is not opposed to a reasonable degree of honest doubt, but too much is too much.

George: I've heard it pointed out that people with critical minds lack conviction. They are opposed to everything. They are negative in their views. So it is that the impartial, critical, scientific training leaves people less positive and cocksure about things. They may become spineless.

Clyde: It may not be so much of a crime to be spineless in your thinking, when you're just "arm chair" reformers, as our group, but when you're out in the cold world doing things, you have to act; you have to have a spine. You have to make up your mind.

Doctor: Critical, open-minded thinking runs into considerable opposition from tradition, custom, and the people who are "in the saddle" running things.

Every man has some personal interests to protect. The banker, editor, teacher, preacher, or farmer can seldom consider an issue from all angles, if it looms up as a threat to his job, his family pride, or his social position. He must defend himself. He resents criticism. He opposes that which threatens his *status quo*.

Clyde: That may be true, but the big trouble is that most of us don't care to be bothered. We prefer to follow the crowd, or "ride on the bandwagon," regardless of whether the crowd is right or wrong. As long as we are having a good time, why be bothered?

Doctor: Those who are critical annoy the group. They don't care to be bothered. Especially do the leaders of established group programs, or government, resent criticism. Those who find fault are considered unloyal.

Fred: I get tired of this "hip-hip-hooray" loyalty. It's got to the point where everyone must be a "booster" for his school, home town, or club, even if it is not worthy of support, or he will be condemned and left out. "My country, right or wrong," is the popular motto. And even in our own group here, I don't seem to get much encouragement when I take a critical attitude.

Doctor: Our discussion indicates that the critical aspect of scientific thinking is not doomed to an easy time. You will find a good clue for solving this problem in the Golden Age of Athens. There isn't so much to be said for the Spartans, Boeotians, or for Thebes, but from Athens alone came Pericles, Plato,

Aristotle, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Socrates—a roster of genius without end. Now there must be a reason.

It seems that for a few decades man worshipped intellect. The veil was drawn aside and posterity was shown the capacity of the human mind. It is significant that our word "school" comes from the Greek word "leisure." The Athenians thought it obvious that anyone with leisure would employ it in thinking. To our ears the word "philosophy" has an austere, if not, sleepy sound. It did not have that sound in the original Greek. To the Athenians it meant the endeavor to understand, and they called it what they felt it to be—"The love of knowledge."

These Athenians feared nothing. There was nothing into which they did not inquire freely. Wherever thinking took them, they had the courage to take the next step. The Greeks worshipped proportion, and because they considered excess the only crime, they knew liberty as no other breed of men have known it. During the World War what chance would a play have had on Broadway which showed General Pershing as a coward, ridiculed the Allies, depicted Uncle Sam as a blustering bully, or glorified pacifism? Yet, when Athens was fighting for her life, a play of Aristophanes did the exact equivalent. Freedom of speech was implicit in the Athenian philosophy.

George: I brought this clipping from a daily paper in which President Glenn Frank of the University of Wisconsin writes that "The will to believe has given us our great religious leaders. The goal of the

intelligent man is a character in which the will to believe and the will to doubt meet and mingle. Neither alone can make a whole man. Humanity owes much to the saint and much to the scientist, but humanity would fare badly if the world were peopled solely by saints with a blind faith, or by scientists with a blind doubt. The temptation of the scientific man is not to act at all because he wants to be absolutely sure of his ground. We must act in the light of the best we know at any given moment, but we must be willing to hold our beliefs open to revision in the light of new facts. Thus can we combine saint and scientist." Balance is what we need.

Henry: I'm in favor of giving religious thinkers as much credit as the scientists.

Doctor: If truth were fixed and static, then the human mind could be taught the correct views from childhood on. As it is, we have to keep revising our conclusions in the light of the best information we have. We must expect changes, look for them, and learn to make them, if we are to continue to grow mentally. This is the spirit of science.

Fred: To me that sounds reasonable. That is the way we had to learn to skate, or to use language.

Clyde: It looks as though all our mental growth is a matter of continuous change, doesn't it?

Doctor: In religion, too? Is that the way we get our best ideas of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven?

Fred: I seem to have been changing my ideas. These discussions have given me a new interest in religion.

Henry: I'm beginning to change my ideas about science.

Doctor: We'll have to save our discussions on religion until a later date. There is another major consideration on this subject of the scientific attitude. Ask some of your teachers what science means by "materialism" and "determinism." We'll discuss those subjects next time.

CHAPTER V

SCIENCE, A MATERIALISTIC AND MECHANISTIC ATTITUDE

There are two worlds—

The world we measure with line and rule,

And the world we feel with our hearts and imaginations.

—*Leigh L. Hunt.*

"I seem to be thinking more and more as a materialist. Nothing seems real except that which I can see, taste, touch hear, or smell. There doesn't seem to be such a thing as Universal Spirit, or any kind of Spirit, as most ministers claim."

The boys heard these words of a young college freshman as they stepped onto the porch at the Doctor's home. It sounded the gong for an afternoon of intellectual "hullabaloo" even though the young man could not remain to share in it. No sooner had he gone than the engines started.

Henry: What do you suppose makes a fellow think that way?

Doctor: Oh, a number of things. You'd readily understand, if you knew him as well as I do. Marvin comes from a fairly rich home. All through his "romper age," and during his school days, he possessed an abundance of material "things," such as, un-

usual toys, an expensive bicycle, plenty of spending money, and now he has a Marmon roadster. It is quite natural that "things" should come to be more important to him than intangibles.

Clyde: "Hot pups," but he must have been a lucky boy!

Doctor: Then, our own country, with all of its pre-depression prosperity has tended to make everyone a little materialistic. We hear people evaluate airplanes in terms of speed, and power. Colleges are spoken of in terms of so many millions of endowment, or so many thousand students. How could Marvin help but be impressed by the fact that his native land is the richest in the world? We possess material things in abundance, compared to other countries.

Fred: Our art teacher in school says that American architecture, with its massive structures and its utilitarian impression, is symbolic of the materialistic emphasis in our culture. He says that art is the conveyance of the spirit by means of matter. Then he classifies the arts according to the weight and density of matter. At the bottom of the hierarchy is architecture, then sculpture, painting, poetry, and finally, at the top, music. In music, of the three elements that compose it, timbre or tone still possess a shade of matter, while rhythm and melody are spiritual. I can see that we are a little too materialistic in this country, but from a scientific point of view, it seems to be best.

Doctor: You mention the third factor which has accentuated Marvin's materialistic attitude, namely,

his love of science. Here he found practically everything interpreted in terms of matter. To the botanist, a flower is not part of a beautiful garden decoration from which one gains inspiration, but an organism made up of sepals, stigma, ovaries, and petals. Loch Lomond would not be a fascinating mirror to the chemist, but a collection of so much hydrogen, oxygen, and free gas. Likewise, to the physicist, Liszt's "Liebestraum" would not be an immortal work which found its way into the heart of many a mechanic, but a problem in sound waves and the vibration of ether.

Fred: Of course, most scientists can appreciate beauty in nature and music, too.

Doctor: Granted, but Sir Oliver Lodge, writing for the physicist and the astronomer, says, "We live in an unbounded universe of space containing spherical masses of matter, some hot and glowing, some dark and cool, distributed not at random, but obedient to law and order, with motions that can be formulated and positions that can be more or less predicted. Examining matter more closely, with the help of instruments of precision, we find it consists of atoms of known size and behavior."

If he stopped at this point, he would have stated the materialistic and deterministic view of science as it is believed by many. But he goes on to say, "We find that these ultimate atoms of matter are not really ultimate, but are composed of something else, something that we call electricity. And this electricity also exists in little specs, which appear to imitate the larger masses in their regular motions, and which display a

region of law and order in the very interior of the atom. Then, when we come to investigate the intermediate region of apparently empty space, we find that it is not empty, but contains a something that welds all the separate fragments of matter into a cosmic whole, and also that it carries vibrations and transmits force one to another."

George: I haven't studied enough science to know what you have been talking about, but does the discussion thus far mean that all of us are inclined to be materialistic in our view of life by the degree to which we are surrounded by material things in our homes, our country, and to the degree that we are educated scientifically?

Doctor: This is what happens to immature young people, if nothing comes along to balance their thinking, or if they are not able mentally to penetrate beneath surface impressions.

Henry: I'm against this tendency toward materialistic thinking. When young people get to thinking that way it's just too bad.

Fred: What would you say if I admitted that I was a materialist?

Henry: I'd say you were sort of dumb.

Clyde: And natural!

Doctor: Sir Oliver Lodge mentioned an aspect of science which is not so difficult to understand, and it is very far-reaching in its significance. It is spoken of as natural law. It involves the mechanical way in which scientists regard nature. They have discovered that all physical processes, such as, rainfall, the ebb

and flow of the tide, digestion, or blood circulation, can be described in this manner.

Clyde: I've been impressed with the fact that among primitive peoples, a medicine-man, or some tribal priest is called when a child is sick. Without any of the laws of the human body in mind, this trusted man would dance about and make mysterious gestures in his attempt to scare the "evil spirit" out of the infant.

George: Just last week I read in the paper of a tribe which had been praying, fasting, and dancing in order to increase their crops. I suppose, with such people, there is no such thing as natural law. It's all magic. The crops grow, the storms rage, the child is healed because some "spirit" wills it.

Doctor: Quite true, and from this simple beginning, science has discovered, century after century, that the world operates very much like a huge machine. That is, after the laws which govern any phase of life have been discovered, the process functions much like an old-fashioned pump. When the handle is pushed down with enough pressure, the water gushes out. Thus, in a simple way, the law of cause and effect may be demonstrated.

Henry: But this represents human beings as helpless creatures caught in the machinery of the universe, doesn't it?

Doctor: So some scientists think. I have heard one psychologist of an extreme kind say that "Men are accidental collocations of physical atoms. What they think is spirit in them is as much a chemico-

mechanical product as phosphorescence in the sea and essentially as transient. They are the passive results of heredity and environment, and by them they are as mechanically determined as is a locomotive by its steam pressure and its rails. They have no spiritual source, no spiritual meaning, no spiritual destiny, and no control over their own character or development."

Clyde: That would make a good speech. I'd like to learn it, even though I don't know what the "ten dollar" words mean.

Henry: I doubt if I agree with him. It doesn't sound any too good to me.

Doctor: This writer went on to say, "People think as they do because of a molecular action in the brain. A Christian believes in God because his molecules maneuver so, and his opponent is an atheist because his molecules maneuver otherwise. All convictions of truth, however well debated and reasoned out, are fundamentally the work of atoms, not of mind." According to this view, you see, we are not free agents with free wills. Our minds cannot dominate our bodies and conduct. We love, we fight, we do good, we err, because our behavior is mechanically controlled in accordance with the laws of nature.

Henry: Talk about the dragons of ancient times which haunted people. This demon is far worse, for it is advocated by people who are supposed to be educated!

Doctor: Let us go a step ahead. It is half truths that are most disturbing. If men act only as so-called molecular action pre-determines, then they are not re-

sponsible for their conduct, nor the misery in the world. The forces of nature are responsible. If this is true, then why should we labor, sweat, toil, and fight for ideals, for a better social order, for the Kingdom of God on Earth? According to this extreme view, we are only helpless cogs in a universal machine which cares nothing about us.

Henry: And then they talk about the contributions of science to human welfare. If this is a sample, I can readily see that science and religion are not so harmonious as I used to think. Do all prophets of science hold such pessimistic views?

Doctor: Certainly not. Much of the evidence of science seems to argue against determinism. When we see a little child playing in the sand with his father, when we hear the childish laughter, and we note the father revelling in his child's ecstasy, and that they are living in a happy, harmonious universe, it seems doubtful that they are entirely controlled by the mechanical forces and laws of nature.

And furthermore, says a critic of materialism, "The materialist asks us to believe that from elements utterly devoid of reason and morals, without conscious purpose and plan—there comes into existence, little by little, through the operation either of blind chance or impersonal law, or some mysterious inner urge not otherwise definable, this wonderful universe that modern science reveals to us, a world responsive to the mind of man, lending itself to his use, a world he can understand, interpret, and enjoy. Mind appears, and conscience. Ideals arise, and men and women who

will die for them. Dante is born, and Shakespeare, and Newton; Lincoln utters his Gettysburg address, and Jesus the Parable of the Prodigal Son. If mind be concerned in the production of the universe, then one can conceive how these things have come to pass. But if the materialist is right, we have a marvel which passes comprehension. Shall a world without a mind, or a heart, produce a Christ? One may have faith to believe much, and yet, not have faith enough to believe this."

George: This is deep stuff for me, but I guess you're right.

Henry: Anyway you've given us something to think about. I'm more convinced than ever that this materialistic philosophy makes a person a cynic. As for me, it seems entirely wrong.

Fred: Still there's no use being bull-headed when the facts point that way!

Henry: What facts? You and your facts make me tired!

Doctor: Let me summarize and review the facts again for you. There was a time when physics defined matter in terms of atoms. The whole world was built out of such material. Even a person was a conglomeration of atoms. In addition, science discovered the laws which governed these atoms. This idea carried many thinkers off their feet. It was so simple, and certain. As a result, materialism and determinism became popular.

More recently, however, matter, in the old sense of the word, has gone into the discard. The term

"energy" has come into vogue. As a result the dead universe has become alive. Atoms have become bundles of energy. The biologist, armed with his theories of evolution, has stepped into the fray, and advanced the theory of a world-organism, in place of a mechanical world-machine. Formerly, the world was described as fixed and determined; now it is conceived as emerging, stage by stage, into something more adequate. In this way, "materialism" has given way to "emergent evolution."

Clyde: That's all right with me, but what has it got to do with the "heavy date" I have to-night?

Doctor: It has plenty to do with that date, if you'll listen to one more point. We must recognize the supreme importance of the creativeness of man, and in so doing we move from the field of biology to psychology and sociology, for mind is basic to creativity. It is mind that gives meaning to life. Furthermore, a thoroughly mechanistic world may be grounded in intelligence and guided by an aim, just as much as a railroad train, which is mechanical, yet going somewhere.

So you see, it was the physics of the seventeenth century, with its law of gravitation, which gave mankind his first big step ahead in this scientific age, even though it did lead to an over-emphasis on materialism and scientific determinism. Then, the biology of the nineteenth century gave the world the theory of evolution. Finally, the twentieth century is about to make another great generalization in terms of "creative intelligence"—man's most significant power, "mind."

George: That means that Clyde should use his brains more, when he is out on a "date."

Clyde: Absolutely not. Besides, I've got to save the few I have for these meetings.

PART III

THE NATURE OF RELIGION

"The religion of Jesus is practical for us to-day

If we fulfill the conditions He fulfilled in His day;
Undertake a supreme task, the doing of which is
more important than one's own life;

Spend time in silent meditation and intercession
and communion with the Eternal;

Cultivate friendship and fellowship with a group of
intimates and with the great ones of other ages;

Consciously and steadfastly pursue beauty;

Dedicate self unreservedly to the way of sacrificial
good will

And follow the gleam at all costs.

—*Kirby Page.*

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AS A SOURCE OF POWER

. . . And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elated thoughts, a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all object of all thoughts
And rolls through all things.

—*Wordsworth.*

Thou didst make us for Thyself and our hearts are
restless till they find their rest in Thee.

—*St. Augustine.*

A few Sunday mornings later, the Doctor and the boys attended services in one of the more artistic and beautiful churches of the community. This was part of the plan, whereby the group would visit several different churches.

Their whispers were conquered as they entered the rear of the church and faced the altar. Such magnificence! They were transported, for a moment, from the twentieth century back to the Middle Ages. It seemed as if some ancient artisan of the Vatican had come to life to carve the pillars, the pews, and the

beautiful altar before which they knelt. Henry imagined that he saw old Gregory VII ambling majestically, yet humbly, down the aisle. From the pipe organ there poured forth a deep, rich tone—soft, yet powerful—which thoroughly subdued everyone in the congregation.

Even after the conclusion of the services, certain members of the group felt the inspiration of the occasion. The chord-perfect harmony of the choir, the minister's chant of the ritual, and more rich organ music, together with the abundance of dazzling beauty all around, had a profound emotional influence on Henry and George especially. They did not talk for some time after they had left the church.

Henry: Wasn't that service inspiring? It made me feel profoundly religious. I experienced a deep, inner sensation—a sort of divine pull.

George: A new power stirred within me. I don't know what it was, but I always feel in tune with God at such a time.

Fred: Emotional stuff!

Doctor: That emotional pull is the heart and backbone of religion for many people. As a rule, until this element of worship becomes a vital factor in a person's life, his religion tends to lack depth and permanency.

Clyde: Still it is a kind of mysticism, isn't it?

Doctor: Mystical? Yes, but very real in the experience of these people. H. G. Wells speaks of it in this way: "At times in the silence of the night and in rare moments, I come upon a sort of communion

with myself and something that is not myself. It is perhaps poverty of mind and language which obliges me to say that this universal scheme takes on the effects of a sympathetic person, and my communion a quality of fearless worship. These moments happen, and they are the supreme fact of my religion to me; they are the crown of my religious experience."

It seems that when a person is in the presence of a masterpiece by Michael Angelo, an Alhambra, or a Taj Mahal, the sensation of the beauty strikes the mind and satisfies an unexpressed aesthetic hunger. His inner life is so drawn together that he feels himself completely unified. Psychologists speak of this as the integration of personality.

Henry: Our minister suggested in a sermon, not long ago, that during these moments of inspiration, a person has a peculiar sense of unity with God, with nature, or with some object in life.

Clyde: I'm inspired by some girls.

Fred: You would be!

Henry: As I was saying, before being so rudely interrupted, our minister illustrated his point by calling attention to the different ways in which people study an oil painting. One person might stand off and study it objectively and critically. In contrast to this, another person might seek to "enter into" the very life and purpose of the picture. He seeks "the feel" of it, so to speak.

Doctor: Naturalists have something of this same emotional feeling of identity with the trees, the mountains, and the flowers. In the spirit of the poet they

may sway with the branches, stretch up with the trees, and become happy with the song of the birds. A good illustration of this viewpoint is found in the experience of a farmer lad, who roams over the hillside and follows the brook, until it becomes as much a part of his life as is his arm or his eye. To take such a boy away from the hillsides, which have become part and parcel of his life, brings distressing mental torture to him. We say he is homesick for his country home, when he goes away to school in some large city. This same psychic experience occurs in many a family group where the members are closely knit together. The group lives as a psychological unit, and all feel deeply the loss, when one member dies.

A little child has this same emotional attachment to its toys. It does not consider these playthings as something outside and isolated from itself. On the contrary, these objects, whatever they may be, make up "the self," just as much as do the hair, legs, and head. Mental and spiritual growth in the life of the child involves the enlargement of these relationships, from toys and parents to companions and nature, from loyalty to his home town to that of his country, other races, and to God. This viewpoint places an emphasis on a larger environment, an imaginary environment, if you want to call it that. It stimulates a person to think of life as lying beyond the frontiers of this physical world.

Clyde: I suppose prayer is an important factor in the lives of people who think of religion in this way.

Doctor: Such a person does not pray for wisdom

or wealth, but he seeks a feeling of spiritual elevation. He considers himself something of a receptive vessel. He is aware of an inflowing spiritual power. He is in constant contact with a source of psychic power, because he conceives himself as identified and in harmony with something higher and greater than himself.

Fred: All you say sounds reasonable enough, but I can't get over thinking of it as a kind of superstition.

Doctor: I have been trying to evade your point in order to give you a fuller understanding of the psychology of worship. When a person believes in things that cannot be explained, it may be due to ignorance, but remember that the Anglo-Saxon form of the word "worship" suggests an appreciation of the worth-ship of life. Worship need not be an unintelligent adoration of an unknown deity, as you have supposed. It is rather an appreciation and worship of the best we know, of beauty in nature and art, of truth in learning and science, of the noble impulses in folks, of love for God. It is not entirely self-abasement, but identifying oneself with all that is inspiring in life, a feeling of at-one-ness with the world in which we live, and with God. It has been said that worship is that perfect emotional adjustment of a person to the universe and to God.

George: From time to time, when I have had a chance to meet great men, I have been aware of some peculiar power in their lives.

Henry: These inspirational moments flit away too quickly to suit me. I wish I could live in the realm

of inspiration for long periods of time, but it doesn't seem to work that way.

Doctor: Unfortunately, these periods of exaltation are too infrequent and too short in duration to suit most people. All of us would be better, if we worshipped more. The reason for this transitory nature of worship has been explained this way: "There is a gathering together of fragments into a unified object, much as the broken letters of a motion picture title are seen to assemble themselves on the screen into a complete word. The vision of the whole is achieved in a moment of attention, suspended between the period in which these fragments are brought together and the period in which the sense of the whole once more disintegrates into the miscellaneous affairs of every day life." Inspirational experiences are like that, I guess.

Fred: Well, I never have these mystical feelings, not even when I go to church.

Doctor: There are many people like that. Let me tell you a story: "Bishop Gore, of the Church of England, once found himself called upon to advise one of his country's leading scientific men, a former devout worshipper in the Anglo-Catholic church. The good bishop was a wise, gentle person who knew that this was no case for argument. He understood both human nature and the power of the majestic ritual of his church. So he advised his troubled friend to try an experiment: to continue to attend his church, to worship, especially at the Mass, as he had always done in the days before he had lost his faith, and to

see if he did not regain the old sureness of conviction which he had lost. Some months later the bishop found his old friend again in his study. He had come to thank the bishop and to assure him that the experiment had been completely successful, that once more he found himself secure in his faith."

George: That sounds practical.

Doctor: Your introduction of the word "practical" suggests a point in philosophy. In the above story we say his idea was "true, because it worked." This is the view of Pragmatism and it is in contrast to Rationalism which would say, "It worked, because it was true."

Clyde: Protestant churches do not emphasize the element of worship so much, do they?

Doctor: Of course that varies, but in the reformed churches the emphasis centers around the sermon. You will note that very often the pulpit in a protestant church is at the center of the chapel, while in the Roman Catholic church, and churches which emphasize worship, the pulpit is to the side, with the altar, symbolizing God, in the center.

Fred: Still this phase of religion isn't so popular to-day, as far as I can see.

Henry: I would say that people have this inner spiritual restlessness to-day, just as much as did Moses and other religious leaders. I think most folks who aren't spiritually dead are aware of their incompleteness and crave some contact with the source of their being.

Doctor: It has been said that the eighteenth cen-

tury spoke of mysticism with a sneer, the nineteenth century apologetically, but the twentieth century has revived it. Even science has made a right about face, and physicists like Eddington, say, "Physical theories do not reach ultimate realities. We fashion them in our image as symbols. And the frank recognition that physical science is concerned with a world of shadows, is one of the most significant of recent advances."

Henry: Even science appears to be an ally of the mystic.

Doctor: There are other phases of religion which we should consider. For the present it should be clear that religion, as we have discussed it to-day, may be regarded as a reservoir of great power. Those religious folks who are in touch with this power can use it in the battles of daily life.

Clyde: You don't mean that this power helps them to do better in their school work, or in a football game?

Doctor: I'd say yes, and unless a person does harness this power to everyday problems, it may become like a powerful electric motor, spinning round and round, but pulling nothing.

George: Let's have some fun next time we meet and see if we can find any religion in Clyde.

Clyde: You'd be surprised, and it may prove a shock to you.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION EXPRESSED IN LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP

Though I have all knowledge, understand all mysteries,
And have not love, I am nothing.

I Corinthians 13:2.

Religion is the practice of love in daily life.

—Mahatma Gandhi.

Religion fails unless it finds at the heart of the universe
That which it can love.

—Lynn Harold Hough.

He drew a circle that shut me out
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout—
But love and I had the wit to win,
We drew a circle that took him in.

—Edwin Markham.

It was Christmas eve, a night destined to contain more mental stimulation than the boys had had for a long time. The air was filled with carol melodies proclaiming "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men." Organized serenaders, radio broadcasters, and even the chimes in a downtown department store preached the harmonious gospel of Christmas. The boys had planned to take baskets of food and toys to several poor families. Fred and Henry had come from

working class homes, so they understood something of the joy they might bring to others. The fun and frolic of preparation suddenly changed to a silent seriousness as they returned to the Doctor's home.

The boys were dumbfounded to have the father of one family refuse the basket. The home of this family was cold. The father had been unemployed. The children were poorly clothed. Then, as the mother reached for the basket, with a smile on her face, her husband said, "We thank you, but we don't want charity."

The boys were stunned. They hardly knew what to say. The Doctor tried to relieve the situation by talking about the happiness their group had brought to the other families.

Doctor: It means much to have friends when trouble comes into our lives. Friends are like the sunshine and the flowers. Every human soul has a craving for companionship and intimacy. The lonesome boy becomes chummy with his dog. The mountain hermit becomes friendly with the birds. To be alone in the world is little short of tragic. It is not that we are born gregarious, but rather that this spirit is kindled within most of us as little children by a mother's love, a sympathetic teacher, or a friendly neighborhood. Thus it is that another phase of religion appears wherever we find an attitude of helpfulness, kindness, sympathy, and co-operation. This is why the Christmas spirit is basically religious.

Clyde: Perhaps the reason that man refused our Christmas basket was because we were strangers to

him. I don't accept favors from people that are strangers.

George: Doctor, elaborate on your idea of friendship a little more.

Doctor: Have you noticed that when friendship centers almost wholly in some activity—being together, doing something—it is plenty of fun, but the comradeship seems to lack depth? In such instances, you merely mingle with each other in pleasant activities—basketball, dances, movies. The activity takes up your leisure time in an agreeable manner, but these contacts are more or less shifting and superficial. Seldom do these good times afford possibilities for the close sharing of life. Where the spirit of “eat, drink, and be merry” prevails, it results in “fair weather” friends, as they say. When you meet together in this way, about all that happens is that your personalities only “touch each other.” You influence each other, true enough, but you do not become such intimate comrades.

Henry: Too many friendships are like that—superficial, mere mingling, congenial acquaintances. As long as a person is a good spender, he's a good fellow.

Doctor: On the other hand, take the case of two boys that have been pals through high school. They enter into frank conversations about life. They argue with each other about almost everything under the sun. They try to understand and help each other. They tell each other about secret ambitions, puzzling problems, and deep disappointments. We see how

intimately these pals "share life" with each other.

In the first situation I mentioned, the boys may not be any more intimate than to talk about the weather, the baseball season, or the various kinds of automobiles. In such instances, the personality of one may not impinge on that of the other to any marked extent. The first type of friendship centers largely in physical proximity and contact with other people, while in the second case, there is more of an intellectual sharing.

Clyde: There is a place for both types of friendship. Sometimes I want to be serious, and then again I prefer to be happy-go-lucky.

Doctor: Let us go a step farther. When you develop especially close friends, there is an intangible factor which enters in. For instance, as you walk across the park alone, or drive slowly along the open road in your automobile, suddenly there flashes into your mind, the image of your mother, your brother, or even a girl friend.

Clyde: Especially the latter.

Henry: You're dragging in this "puppy" love, when we're talking about religion. Don't let your mind wander.

Doctor: Don't be too quick to criticize Clyde. It may be that as he ponders about some lovely girl, recalling happy experiences or conversations they have had, he may be inspired to be a better man.

George: I'd say you don't know Clyde as well as I do.

Doctor: All right, let me say then that you are faced with some problem, or tempted to do wrong.

At this moment your mother, or some personality, such as your teacher, flits into your mind. It is then that you say to yourself, "What would my mother or teacher want me to do?"

George: I've had that experience many times.

Doctor: Every boy has had experiences like that. This friend, be it your girl, your mother, your chum, seems to slip into your mind and live in your thinking. For any length of time you may wish, dream, and think about this person. They may be hundreds of miles away. This is the spiritual aspect of friendship.

Fred: Just what has this to do with religion?

Doctor: Many religious people consider that Jesus dwells in their lives in just the manner I have mentioned. They live in communion and fellowship with Jesus, or some prophet. Patron saints are very significant from this viewpoint in the religious thinking of the Mexican people. Thus it is that Christ, or a saint, lives in the life of that person when he is at home, while playing a game, in his work, and throughout the day.

Fred: Among young people, most friendships are of the first type, aren't they? Young people like to hang around together, but they seldom share their more intimate problems.

Doctor: That is why so many boy and girl friendships are superficial. If one, or the other, suggests some fundamental topic of conversation, the reaction is, "Don't get serious." They prefer jesting, repartee, and banter. That is why young people fail to reveal

their true selves to each other. They hide behind bright remarks and social formalities.

George: Until they get married. Then the truth comes out.

Fred: There is so much in our modern life which interferes with intimate friendships. For one thing, we seem to be "on the go." We move about a good deal, and that breaks up abiding friendships.

Clyde: Then our autos can take us to places where we are strangers.

Henry: I suppose you mean roadhouses.

Doctor: This impersonal relationship arises when we go to large churches and schools. It is quite impossible to even know very many of the people with whom you have contacts.

George: So many people live in apartments now-a-days where no attempt is made to get acquainted with neighbors. Neighborliness breaks down.

Clyde: What has this got to do with the spirit of Christmas!

George: Why, everything! Modern life is wrecking the growth of friendship. Christmas is in danger of becoming just another formal holiday.

Doctor: I can summarize our discussion thus far by saying that city life has become impersonal. The human touch has begun to disappear. The spirit of friendliness has broken down. Under such conditions religion finds it hard to take root. Suspicion arises on every hand. Hatred breeds in factories and slums. Fellowship and goodwill grow from fellow-feeling. It thrives best, not where people are satisfied to asso-

ciate with each other solely in activity, but where they share their thoughts, hope, and burdens.

Fred: I dislike this artificial attempt to be agreeable, which seems to be necessary, if friendship is to be cultivated. I like to differ with people at times without having them take it as a personal assault.

Doctor: In its lower forms, fellowship is found where the individuals agree with each other and hold the same views. But, in its nobler aspects, fellowship takes place even where there is a difference, or disagreement in viewpoints. In this latter case, the conflicting persons do not attempt to force their aims or plans on the other person, but they listen to each other and seek to understand the viewpoint of the other individual. In such a fellowship group, the individuals do not come out of the process like manufactured bricks, uniform in feelings and ideas, but the fellowship experience gives each person increased mutual understanding and appreciation. Where fellowship of this kind exists, individuals may differ and still be the best of friends.

Fred: Groups of that sort would suit me perfectly. It would be a worth-while life-mission to spread this kind of a gospel of fellowship.

George: It seems to me that we are getting away from our problem of love and religion. My idea is that religion is opposed to love of oneself, or selfishness. Hate and jealousy are out of harmony with the spirit of love in religion, according to my notion.

Henry: The major characteristic of Jesus on this point is that he did not limit sympathy and kindness

to just those "within his own circle." He made it all-inclusive.

Doctor: The real test of friendliness appears when we must deal with those we dislike—our enemies, other races, and those we consider inferior to us. It is easy to be friends with those who are superior, but religion of the kind we have been discussing demands the more difficult thing.

George: If this aspect of religion, the element of love, which we sing about in church could leaven the whole human lump, this old world would soon be vastly different. And if it doesn't, I'd say we were in danger of worshipping the God of love without really loving our neighbor.

Doctor: Religion has tackled a big job, if it is to spread the gospel of love. In its practical message, it talks in terms of the brotherhood of all men. Year in and year out, religion spreads the spirit of good will. That is the Christmas spirit. It glorifies "Abou Ben Adam" and says, "May his tribe increase." It sings songs of love and brotherhood. Its literature is filled with stories of Jeremiah, Tolstoi, Neesima Shimeta, Florence Nightingale, Abraham Lincoln, Jacob Riis, and an endless roll of other men and women who were inspired to help their fellowmen.

Fred: Spreading the Christmas spirit of peace on earth, good will throughout the entire year and the whole world is fine, but that is talking in terms of something pretty far away. Brotherhood! Will we ever attain that goal?

Doctor: I see no reason why we should not dis-

cuss the meaning of "peace and goodwill" in your school, toward poor people, between capital and labor, and in any every day situation.

Clyde: Sure, we can talk, but that won't help much.

Henry: Why be so cynical! Wait and see!

George: I'm in favor of some practical discussions like that, too.

Doctor: Splendid. I'm going to ask Henry to act as our secretary. He can make a record of all these unanswered points. We can arrange them for a series of sessions later.

Clyde: I want to talk more about the experience we had to-night with the father who refused our gesture of the Christmas spirit.

Doctor: Christmas symbolizes the humanitarian emphasis in religion, while Easter might be said to be the symbol of our last discussion—the source of new life and power.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGION AS LOYALTY TO A CAUSE

Where are you going, Youth?
To live to-day above the past,
To make to-morrow sure and fast,
To nail God's colors to the mast
Then God go with you, Youth.

—*John Oxenham.*

Religion is at heart loyalty—loyalty to the highest we know.

—*Royce.*

Young man, identify yourself with some great but unpopular cause.

—*Wendell Phillips.*

The boys were laughing about the resolutions that they had made at a New Year's party, which the church young people's society had held.

George: I think it's a good idea definitely to make up your mind once in a while on some important issues.

Henry: But why is it necessary to wait until New Year's?

Fred: And why make such foolish resolutions that they "go up in smoke" the very next week after?

George: Perhaps it would be better if people made group resolutions. That is, instead of personal decisions, the group would set new goals, and in turn

the group would help all of its members to succeed in attaining them.

Clyde: That might be a good idea.

Doctor: This idea of resolutions, be they individual or group, arises from the desire of people to make the present different from the past, and the future better than the present. We are never fully satisfied with ourselves, or with social life round about us. While there is usually a difference of opinion as to what should be done, and fortunately so, still people have always banded themselves together for protection and to achieve worthy goals of some kind.

George: This is the social service aspect of religion, isn't it?

Doctor: There was a time when men believed that religion consisted mainly in the worship of God. To-day we say, "He serves God most who serves men best."

George: This is the kind of religion which appeals to me.

Henry: My English teacher pointed out not long ago that young people have always been anxious to join some challenging cause. Says Gareth to his aged mother, Bellicent, as she strives to keep him at home, away from the perils and hardships of life:

"How can you keep me tethered to you—shame!

Man I am grown, a man's work must I do.

Follow the deer? Follow the Christ, the King,

Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King—

Else, wherefore born?"

Clyde: You must have learned that poem in order to get a better grade in class. You speak your piece very well. Bravo!

Doctor: It shows that down through the long ages, and in the face of the most threatening obstacles, men have dared to do and to die, when they were convinced that the cause they served was a worthy one. They have not prayed for easy lives, but rather, for power equal to their task.

Clyde: This fighting for a noble cause makes good poetry, but I have neglected my history so much that I'm not sure. Can history be written in terms of great causes?

Fred: Historically, all leaders were not out to conquer the world, as the Caesars and Napoleon. The Athenians were trying to establish a culture based on "beauty, truth, and goodness." The French shibboleth of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" inspired many movements directed toward the cause of democracy.

Clyde: Perhaps, but all that is pretty vague in my mind.

Fred: Vague? Much of our own political progress has come from it. These are the movements which have provided equality of opportunity in education, religion, employment, and things like that.

George: And the Civil War grew out of these ideals to some extent. The emancipation of human souls from serfdom, slavery, and labor tyranny have been paramount causes to which wide awake young men gave their allegiance in the past.

Clyde: But, these causes are all outside the church and religion, as far as I can see.

Doctor: In some instances causes have arisen outside of the church and may have been opposed by the church. On the other hand, the church has inspired its members to engage actively in many of these great causes.

It happens that many causes take on a religious character as the devotion of their followers increases. Let me read this comment on Russia, even though it may sound strange and unreasonable: "In atheistic Russia we observe a fairly successful attempt to undermine the authority of the church as a tangible institution conducting certain sacred ceremonials. Superficially one might argue that the traditional church of Russia has been rendered powerless by the fierce negation of proletarian scepticism . . . What we find is the old reverential vitality of religious impulse seeking new embodiment in the religion of Leninism. Lenin has been canonized. Lenin is a saint (in Russia). The credulous little people of that great land, light sanctimonious candles to that revered saint, and come in droves to kneel and worship at his perpetual bier."

Fred: I thought bolshevism was a set of economic, political, and social principles, rather than a religion.

Doctor: It is, but it may take on all the traits of a religion, too. Let me read further: "Every communist is really a missionary, working for the revolution which will undermine capitalism. He is sure of

his cause. He knows he is right. His hymnal opens with the International. His gospel includes the words and life of Marx and Lenin. The symbol of his faith is not the cross, nor the crescent, but the hammer and sickle. The high and mighty shall be cast down and those of low degree exalted." This should make it clear how easily a cause, even of a political character, may take on the nature of religion for its devoted followers.

Henry: I never thought of it that way.

George: If Lenin can be "deified" as easily as that, then why cannot the same thing be said of George Washington? His picture hangs in more homes and offices than Lenin's.

Clyde: Who wants to join my cause and sacrifice his life to secure the return of the saloon? I only want devoted followers who will carry the symbol of the over-flowing glass of beer.

Henry: Cut out your nonsense. A cause to be religious must have a good purpose.

Clyde: My cause has a good purpose, and if it can't be made a religious cause, then what makes a cause religious?

Doctor: First, a cause, to be religious, starts with a worthy ideal. This ideal, in turn, inspires people to become followers. As the followers gain increased conviction regarding the supreme worth of their cause, they enlist others, sacrifice and fight for the achievement of their goal. As the devotion of the followers increases to a high emotional pitch, they claim God to be the inspiration of their cause, and the practical

application of their cause is in harmony with the Kingdom of God on Earth. I am not positive that I have mentioned all the points, but you get the idea.

Henry: All you say is interesting, but, to me Christianity is the greatest of all causes.

Fred: But, what are Christians actually doing to achieve their goal? It wouldn't be so bad, if they did more, and talked less.

Henry: They're doing lots more than you socialists and communists. There's the missionary movement, the interest of Christian leaders in world peace, and lots of humanitarian projects, such as colleges, hospitals, and charity. These have the backing of the church and its members.

Doctor: The crux of the matter in the Christian religion centers around the supreme worth of human personality. Jesus attached great value to the life of a woman, child, foreigner, or even a slave.

Fred: Liberal Christians seem to be transferring their zeal from serving God to a concern for their fellow-men. But the liberals are in the minority still.

Doctor: When this service to humanity becomes the prime religious motive, and the idea of God relatively unimportant, then such a religious person has been called a "Humanist." You'll hear this term quite often now.

Clyde: The young people I know don't care about reforming and making over everybody and everything.

George: I know the kind. They give the impression that everything will turn out all right, even if

they are not concerned personally, or if they don't care what happens.

Fred: Oh, I don't know, but you know how young people are to-day.

George: I may be different, but many times I have ideas for "turning the world on its nose." I crave to do something about the corruptness of politics. I'd like to join some cause and fight to the finish, just like in a football game. I'm for more justice in this old world.

Doctor: Without a doubt human progress has come about largely because some men have discovered causes to which they could dedicate their lives. In reality, great personalities exert an influence for good, primarily because they do attach themselves to a cause. Mention the name of any great man, and you must next mention the cause to which he devoted his life. The cause becomes the personification of its leader.

Clyde: Too many causes have been led astray by fanatics.

Fred: Yes, and in politics, as we know it, the leaders exploit the cause for personal and financial gain.

Doctor: Even Christianity has certain weaknesses. The church, for instance, has spent too much effort in keeping the machinery of the organization going, rather than in supporting worthy social causes. Frequently it loses sight of its goal and purpose. The church becomes an "end in itself," rather than a means to attain the end. The money it raises and spends

is used to strengthen the organization, rather than to achieve its purpose.

Henry: Is it possible to secure unity, and group strength, around a cause, without this organization over-emphasis?

Doctor: Yes, if each member of the group is encouraged to think as he desires, and evolve his own plans. That is, each member subscribes to the purpose of the group, but he can be original and creative in determining the program, rather than by supporting some rigid, well worked out plan.

Clyde: Would such a plan really work? The cause would lack unity and co-ordination.

Doctor: To some extent you are right. Agreement is sacrificed, but enthusiasm for the cause is increased.

Henry: Our Hi-Y Club is like that. Each group is free to work out its own program in harmony with the Hi-Y purpose, namely, "To create, maintain, and extend high standards of Christian character in the school and community."

Clyde: The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is much like that, isn't it? Their motto is "Worship and Service."

Doctor: Although little is gained by forcing people to agree with you, young people should unite in groups where they have common interests, or some points of agreement. In time they will find worthy causes to which they can be loyal.

Fred: The thing that bothers me is that young people will join groups where self advancement is the

prime object, but they shy away from letting it be known openly, when they join in some religious cause. Sure, they will join a pleasure club, but not too religious a church group. As they get older they will give money to advance some cause, but they don't want it advertised around that they support a reform movement.

Clyde: As for me, I would rather be free to think and do as I please, rather than to be tied down by some cause.

George: Oh, I don't know about that point. You may have a weak spine, but I know plenty of young people who are interested in altruistic causes. They aren't afraid to admit it, either.

Henry: I agree with you. And, there are so many more opportunities along these lines for young people to-day. We'd surprise Clyde if we made a list of such groups in our schools, churches, and community.

Doctor: In the group activities which would appear on such a list, we could detect all the elements of loyalty to a cause—conviction, devotion, industry, creativeness, persistence, earnestness, and loyalty. These terms have religious connections, as you recognize. When any wholesome daily activities assume these characteristics, the personality of any young person becomes integrated around some cause. In reality, God seems to find expression in these daily expressions of youthful energy.

I am sure George feels that way about his school athletics. Even in sports the seed may be sown, which in time grows into an allegiance and loyalty compara-

ble to a cause. It may be the cause of clean sportsmanship, or using a place of leadership in the school to support high standards.

On the other hand, Fred has indicated that many people evaluate groups in terms of what they get out of them. This is true, but many individuals live for something bigger than themselves—a cause, a group, an ideal, a humanity, a Kingdom of God, a universe. Then it is that he feels the pull of this aspect of religion, and God comes to have a new meaning for him.

Our discussion should stimulate us to recognize religion wherever it is found, and help it to grow, rather than to think of religion as only that which is attached to some specific church service.

Henry: Now I understand why the word "religion" has been derived from the Latin "re" and "ligo" meaning "to bind together."

Clyde: What a bright and shining student you turned out to be! I wish I could be as satisfied on this matter of religion as Henry.

Doctor: There is to be another day, and another discussion. Come back and see what we can do for you next time.

CHAPTER IX

RELIGION INTERPRETED AS MORALS AND IDEALS

Blessed is he who carries within himself a God, an ideal, and who obeys it;

An ideal of science, an ideal of art, an ideal of the gospel virtues.

—*Louis Pasteur.*

Nothing makes the heart so pure, so religious, as the desire to create something perfect.

—*Michael Angelo.*

The moral ideal makes the motion, which Reason seconds, and Society carries.

—*Charles Gray Shaw.*

Doctor: When you talk with people about religion, just what impressions do you get as to what religion is for?

Henry: To save people from sin.

George: To help people be good.

Clyde: But who wants to be good?

Doctor: The Christian idea is that man is a sinner, and religion will redeem him. The Jewish religion is more optimistic about human nature, it emphasizes man's natural goodness. This prayer from the Talmud is recited every morning in the synagogue,

"Lord, the soul which thou hast given unto me is pure."

Fred: In either case religion emphasizes the moral aspect of life. Either you are bad and should become good, or you are pure and should stay that way. But, say what you will, we all become contaminated in this evil world.

Doctor: But, what determines goodness? What is a sin? Who determines what is good and what is bad?

Fred: I've heard it said that morals are no more than the latest expression of shifting group traditions. That is, at various times in history, it has been the "right thing to do" to kill a crippled baby, to seek "an eye for an eye," or to marry several women. The group gave their social approval to these practices and every member of the group thought they were right. Those who did not conform to the dictates of the group became outcasts.

Henry: You're talking about public opinion.

Doctor: Let's assume that Fred has a good point and see where it leads us in our present day social life.

Henry: It leaves us in a mess. There is such a wide difference of opinion that no one knows what is right. One high school group I go with encourage lavish expenditures of money, and gambling, while my parents oppose these things as worldly pleasures.

George: The church I go to opposes even the moderate use of intoxicating liquor. They want me to sign a pledge. In my home, however, we make our

own beer, and light wines are served. Which group shall I follow?

Clyde: We live in an age which changes so fast that moral codes decay faster than new ones can be determined upon. No wonder there is so much disagreement as to what is right, or good, and what is bad.

Doctor: The worst part about the present situation is that public opinion rather openly endorses some things that are wrong.

Henry: I've noticed plenty of indifference about public graft and political underhandedness on the part of the average person.

Doctor: In business, everyone knows, and defends the practice of bribery. Recently a newspaper article pointed out that one dealer has spent a large amount of money for gratuities, and charged it to his expenses, in order to get a \$400,000.00 order from the United States Shipping Board. This practice is a very common form of graft in business, and it is as socially endorsed as the custom of giving tips. Our present scheme of city politics is built on graft. No official secures enough salary to pay his bills. He gets the extra money "on the side." When some grand jury exposes the graft, do the people ever grow indignant? The thing I have noticed is how indifferent the public is. Most people defend the man on the basis that politics operates that way. They even nominate men for office, who have been found guilty of graft. I could go on with illustrations, but you know what I mean.

Clyde: Now don't get personal. My friends never try to have their tickets for speeding "fixed" by a politician.

George: The morals of your groups are above suspicion. Am I supposed to believe that?

Fred: Well, if public opinion can't be depended upon, how are morals to be determined?

Henry: I'd say that the Bible is the best guide. If you study the Bible, you'll be all right.

George: Is the Bible always right?

Doctor: Of course, the Bible is not uniform in its moral teachings. "The old Hebrew law permitted the massacre of all males of a besieged city, but required that, if the town surrendered, its inhabitants should not be killed, but should be enslaved. The law concerning the slave was that he must not be beaten to death, but he might be beaten almost to death.

"The New Testament urges that the slave be loved as a Christian brother. But he remains a slave—a chattel bought and sold. No one in the range of the glorious religious experience recorded in the Bible, ever suggested that slavery was wrong. . . .

" 'Thou shalt not steal' is plain enough, but what is stealing? Is it stealing to make money for work that is not performed, as when a labor union curtails the amount of stone that may be laid in a day? Is it stealing for a group of men to get possession of the stone quarries and raise the price to all the purchasers because of their monopoly? Is it stealing to induce

people to invest in land where there is a practical certainty that they will lose their money?

"The deadest thing is out-of-date morality. That is why the 'blue laws' are so absurd. Petty, hide-bound, legalistic religion is always fighting to preserve some old morality. Prophetic, spiritual, vital religion is always seeking to find the new duties which the new day demands."

Fred: Very often I think that a person can be morally good without believing in God or going to church. I know many people like that.

Doctor: You talk like a Humanist. For a little time such a person lives his best, but most of us know that we need the inspiration of religion to encourage and help us. God re-inforces our moral desires.

George: I'm not keen for following some fixed moral code, or worshipping some static goal. It ought to be possible to struggle toward an ever advancing and growing ideal.

Fred: Fine, but how are we going to get over the tendency of morals becoming nice sounding phrases for lip service.

Doctor: If morals are to be vital, they must be related to everyday life—the ways a person gets money, his attitudes toward the opposite sex, his home responsibilities, and the way a person does his work.

George: I've attended a Young People's Conference where the emphasis was placed on life as a quest for new moral values. What kind of conduct is in harmony with the best interests of society? What is best for the development of human personality?

Doctor: In such instances morals are not a code to be learned, but the result of an adventure, a struggle to attain some goal. When the goal is determined, the group helps each member to live up to it. Perhaps, we are right back to the point that Fred made in the beginning of our discussion, namely, that morals are group customs and traditions, supported by public opinion. Certainly, if these groups of young people have a part in determining what the moral standards are to be, they are more apt to support them, and try to attain them.

Clyde: So we can leave religion out?

Doctor: Yes, if you feel that way about it, but the great majority of moral folks consider religion important. In the first place, religious groups have always claimed that God approved and sanctioned their particular brand of morals. If God says, "Thou Shalt Not Steal," the command is taken more seriously. Secondly, in primitive days, as the ideal of God developed, it was thought that the judgment of such an ideal personality would be safer and better than the "rule of custom," or the dictates of a chieftain. Thirdly, it is part of the very spirit of religion to expect a person to be morally good. That is what religion preaches.

Clyde: I'm not against people having some morals, but I know plenty about the problems of morals among young people. There seems to be such a wide discrepancy between "what I ought to do" and "what I do do." Rather than feel like a hypocrite, I claim for myself no great moral ideals. I take

everything into consideration, and do the best I can under the circumstances. This is why many young people don't care to be openly identified with religious groups. People expect too much of them, and if the person falls short of the ideal, he is called a hypocrite. I think it is best to keep our morals low enough, so we can attain the goal. Why not make morals practical?

Doctor: Your position is a popular one, but it indicates, as well, the biggest difficulty in dealing with morals today. If a boy wants to secure a certain job, he figures out how it can best be done, and attains his goal, even though it is necessary to lie just a little, or bluff quite a bit. If a salesman wishes to make a sale, he is inclined to "put it over" the best he can without stretching the truth too much. This practical method which is so popular to-day, is built around the principle of "the end justifies the means." That's good business.

Henry: Your statement explains just why we need the sanctions of religion. Religion doesn't wink at little underhanded methods, even when the goal is good.

Fred: Oh, yes, but the church has been known to take tainted money, and there are times when points are overlooked in the name of the church.

Henry: But in principal, religion doesn't stand on such shifting ground. It is more inclined to stand openly for righteousness.

Doctor: There is one major point which we must not miss in this idea of morals being determined by

the group. An individual fails in living up to his moral ideals, unless he belongs to groups which encourage and support him. Consequently, if a young man wants to go in quest of the best for himself, and this old world, he must join some groups that support ideals. Furthermore, he must find some one or two members within other groups who believe as he does. This small inner group can stick together and influence the larger group. From a religious point of view, it might be said that they seek the "Will of God" for themselves and for their group. This objective ideal serves as something of a moral compass.

George: Some people seem to have no moral sense whatsoever. They are about like animals.

Doctor: You are right in suspecting that animals have no moral codes, so far as we know. The cows on the farm are content to chew their cud lazily in the shade of the elms. Animals can see, or smell, much better than human beings, but they cannot and do not plan. They are placid, they do not worry, or consciously struggle toward a distant goal. They are satisfied with the level upon which they live.

Not so with most people. They labor, sweat, and plan ever anxious to live on what they think of as a higher plane of life. People wish and dream, due to a dissatisfaction with things as they are. They concern themselves with things as "they ought to be." This is why human beings are able to live in a world of values, morals, and ideals, into which a lower animal cannot enter. Our very discussion to-day indicates that you are dissatisfied, because you are not living

up to the opportunities about you. You are not living your best. But, there is a way out.

Fred: Recently our discussions have given me more enthusiasm for religion than I've had for a long time, but I am of the opinion that God can be left out. Aren't human values sufficient?

Doctor: No, God can be made very much a part of all that we have talked about. However, next time we'll discuss the place of God in religion and in our lives. In the meantime, discover, if you can what people mean when they use the term "God." Or, better, what comes to the mind of a high school boy or girl when they are asked about God?

Clyde: I feel sort of cheated to-day. Our discussion got me to thinking, but I would like to talk about this problem a good deal more. I want to digest some of the ideas you've mentioned and hatch out some entirely new ones. I'm less sure of myself. I don't think I've been on the right track. Perhaps, the thing I need is religion, when I've been trying to minimize and slight its importance.

Doctor: When a person begins searching for something better, he's headed right. I don't bother very much about where a young person is standing. What I like to know is in what direction is he moving. It is at that point that morals serve as a compass and a guide.

CHAPTER X

RELIGION AS THE SEARCH FOR GOD

The Greek Temple was consecrated to the Gods of wisdom and power,

The medieval cathedral was dedicated to a God of judgment and consolation.

And the Renaissance edifice to the God of pride and beauty.

—*Ruskin.*

No man worships the God of his grandfather.

—*Carlyle.*

Think of God in the light of the clearest truth your mind can know

And the purest ideal your heart can dream;

But learn to find him everywhere. In your soul,

And in all the shapes which life and love and duty take.

—*Joseph Fort Newton.*

How do I know, you ask, that in the end God's power will conquer all,

And through eternity His love prove master of our souls?

Need I have proof?

I tell you sir, between a world of chaos and a world where God works on

Through moments men call time, there lies a choice,
And I choose God.

—*Edward Wright.*

Easter came late in March. It was a day of sunshine, but the wind was raw—just such a day as the group might desire to gather round the fireplace. They could hardly wait to start the discussion, and even as they popped corn, they began to talk. Fred, who had declared himself to be a Humanist, because he regarded God as unnecessary, began.

Fred: Doctor, there seem to be so many different ideas of God. At times I think it would be difficult to get agreement even among church folks.

Clyde: Very few people of intelligence think of God as an old man, yet they speak of him as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Doctor: That terminology came from the days of knighthood. The creator was considered as something of a medieval king, seated on a golden throne, with angels as courtiers, playing harps and singing hymns. God was a Ruler, and the whole world was His monarchy. The image of his throne, crown, sceptre, laws, and punishment, or rewards, were the logical outcome in governmental thinking. They were filled with meaning for the people of that period in history. Consequently, this conception of a divine, medieval government was built up by the Christian church, which in turn, claimed the commission to represent God on earth. In this way, through the church, the people came in contact with God every day, through his appointees.

Clyde: Many people have vestiges of this notion in their thinking even to-day, but it doesn't appeal to me.

Doctor: Well, after a time, the governments of Europe, and certain political leaders, chafed under this autocratic domination. What did Henry, the Eighth, care if the Church of Rome did excommunicate him? And in time many religious leaders—Huss, Luther, Calvin, and others revolted, or protested against the control of the Roman church. In the place of the Church, the Bible came to be the authority of many people in religion, but in time more liberal thinkers enthroned the conscience of the individual as the true guide to the will of God. They went so far as to say that each individual was free to believe such parts of the Bible as seemed reasonable to him. They encouraged him to think for himself, and let his conscience be his guide. God was a man's conscience. Little by little this freedom has broken down the solidarity in our views of God, which was the strength of the medieval church, and each person thinks of God as he desires.

Fred: The scientist has observed that the universe operates according to some order and design, so God may be thought of as the Creator, who operates according to law and order.

George: I don't know what they mean, but I've heard philosophers speak of God as the "First Cause." Maybe this notion comes from the field of science.

Clyde: Others speak of God as love, or intelligence.

Henry: This problem is so important to humanity, that I am not surprised Voltaire remarked one time,

"If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him."

Fred: Science has done a lot to wreck these old notions of God, hasn't it?

Doctor: Science joined hands with the revolutionary spirit of the Reformation. Things which the church had explained in terms of the Will of God, science began to explain by new discoveries in astronomy and geology. Certain leaders in the field of science questioned the miracles, and other teachings of the church.

George: I don't believe that all scientists deny the presence of God in the world, though.

Doctor: Certainly not, but scientists did call into question certain of the orthodox views about God and the way God works in the world. Science has made it difficult for religion to hold its footing.

Clyde: Our civilization has almost put God out of business it seems to me. Can you explain that to us?

Doctor: The industrial era is the product of science. Indirectly it has done much to cripple the religious conception of God.

Henry: It is most remarkable that religion and the idea of God, has gone through centuries of disturbance and remains so strong. We just can't get away from it.

Doctor: Regarding the point that Clyde asked, Walter Lippmann has written: "The deep and abiding traditions of religion belong to the countryside. For it is there that man earns his daily bread by sub-

mitting to superhuman forces whose behavior he can only partially control. There is not much he can do when he has ploughed the ground and planted his seed except to wait hopefully for sun and rain from the sky. He is obviously part of a scheme that is greater than himself, subject to elements that transcend his powers and surpass his understanding.

"The city is an acid that dissolves this piety. How different it is from an ancient vineyard where men cultivated what their fathers had planted. In a modern city it is not easy to maintain that reverent attachment to the sources of his being and the steadying of his life by that attachment. It is not natural to form reverent attachments to an apartment on a two year lease, and an imitation mahogany desk on the thirty-second floor of an office building . . . The omnipotence of God means something to men who submit daily to the cycle of the weather and the mysterious power of nature, but the city man puts his faith in furnaces to keep out the cold."

You see, there are many factors which converge to do damage to the idea of God. Consequently, young people are no longer satisfied with a God who is a friendly, old man, ruling the world like a beneficent father. No man can walk on water, so youth surmises, and there are no devils with horns, tails, and pitch forks.

Henry: As a result of this mental confusion about God, some young people have been foolish enough to throw away all their religion with their other broken

playthings of childhood. I don't think that is necessary.

Doctor: On the other hand, there are many young people who are trying to straighten out this muddle. They are seeking information, they are readjusting their ideas, and in this way, they are making religion a quest for a conception of God that is in harmony with reason, modern life, and their ideals. Let me read a paragraph I marked: "To ask for a definition of God seems absurd, for we have no definition. We have only a roadway that leads out toward God. We are convinced beyond peradventure that he who travels merely the path of electrons, atoms, and molecules toward a vision of the Ultimate, misses it, and that he who travels the road of spiritual values, goodness, truth, and beauty, finds it."

And, those who join in such an adventure to discover God are not to be disappointed. They may find that God is "an omnipresent eternal energy, informing and inspiring the whole creation at every instant of time and throughout the infinite space. The word 'energy' fulfills our desire to ascribe power to God, the word 'informing' expresses his moulding and creative activity, while the word 'inspiring' suggests that God is the source of values." So, we might say that the universe is not something apart from God, but life is "His ceaseless presence and activity."

Fred: Then you would say that God is this energy of life which is all about everywhere?

Doctor: Not exactly, but we might say that God is to be found in the forms and expressions of His

eternal energy. For instance, there are times when you apply the terms "good," "worthwhile," or "ideal" to a friendship, to some book, or to a certain discovery in the world. It is at such moments that you can be sure that God is finding expression in these forms of energy. We say, "you feel inspired."

So I could go on and say that God finds expression in the healthful play of little children, in the mental effort of high school boys and girls as they discuss human progress, in the life of Schumann when he composed his beautiful "Traumerei," in the soul of Wordsworth when he stood on the banks of the Wye, meditating on the power of inspiration. In the spirit of the poet and artist, in the mind of the scientist and philosopher, and even in the life of the lad playing in the field, there flows this ceaseless energy which approaches divine form when we speak of it as helpful, inspiring, or beautiful.

George: Your point reminds me of that quotation from Tennyson, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." Our desires point the direction in which our energy becomes organized—play, work, friendships, or education. God can be in all phases of our lives, can't He?

Doctor: Let me go a step farther. We find that this energy does not exist in the individual personality alone. We have discussed already how it becomes mobilized in groups, purposeful groups, which unite in attaining some social or religious objective. This loyalty to a cause may be a Christian quest, or a peasant's revolt. But, God is in these movements

as they work toward a worthy end in the interest of humanity.

Or, you recall the time we talked about this energy expressing itself in sympathy, kindness, service, and love. These widen out into a spirit of comradeship between people, to various forms of brotherhood, and the fatherhood of God. Finally, this energy grows into moral stamina, or one becomes aware of being in harmony with this divine energy, when alone in the woods, or while walking along the lake shore. This same thing happens during a period of worship at church. A person feels "at oneness" with this "omnipresent eternal energy." This we call God.

Clyde: This is an entirely new idea to me. I'd like to ask someone else about it.

Doctor: It should not be so new a thought. You will recognize in this discussion of God, we have touched upon each of the four cornerstones, which we said were basic elements in religion. For instance, when a person is aware of a power in the world greater than his own, we speak of this as God. This power may inspire him to struggle toward a higher ideal, the highest of which we speak of as God. This restless energy that stirs within his soul may find expression in great social causes, love of one's fellow men, in periods of worship, and whenever he feels the presence of God in his life.

Fred: But I do things which are good, and I do not sense this presence of God.

Doctor: Of course, I walk through the woods and do not see all that the forester does. I enjoy the con-

cert, but I am not aware of the harmony or the full meaning of the music. I am not trained that way. I suppose we would say that you had neglected your religious education. But, if you did practice the "presence of God," say in your home, you would recognize a vast difference, you would understand this point.

Clyde: But is God a personality?

Doctor: That is a fundamental question. Let me say that the highest form of energy that we know about is personality. We speak of Jesus as the highest type of personality the world has ever known. Regarding this point, Harry Emerson Fosdick, says: "Men believe in God because they hunger for a world that is not chance and chaos, but that is guided by Purpose. They believe in God, because in their struggle after righteousness they hunger for a Divine Ally in whom righteousness has its origin, its ground and destiny. They believe in God, because they hunger for confidence that someone cares about our race in its conflicts and defeats, and because in their individual experience they want a friend. Without such a faith man feels himself to be, in Goethe's phrase, 'A troubled wanderer upon a darkened earth.' Plainly this elemental human hunger for purpose, righteousness, and friendship, calls for something akin to personality in God. Only persons have purpose, character, and friendliness."

Clyde: This idea appeals to me. It means that "I serve God when I serve my neighbor, or I praise God when I praise the good in any race. I shun God

when I shun the sick, the poor, or those in need, and I am cruel or unjust to God, when I am guilty of offenses to a woman, a child, or a stranger. God is my own best self; God is all that is best in our human heritage; God is a vast cosmic drift toward harmony, fellowship, and mutual aid." I can understand that, all right.

George: I knew we'd find a little religion in Clyde, if we didn't lose hope, and now he's turned out to be more religious than any of us.

Clyde: But I don't want to become a religious fanatic.

Doctor: People only become religious fanatics when they go off on a tangent, when they over-emphasize one of those four basic elements in religion to the isolation of the other points. If he becomes such an enthusiastic supporter of a social cause that nothing else counts, then the emphasis is not good.

Fred: He just gets "nuts" on that subject.

Doctor: We must seek something of a balance, if our religion is to be sane, and effective.

Henry: I could stay all night to discuss religion. I like this.

Doctor: I just said that we must seek a balance in our religious thinking, a balance in work and play, a balance in study and work, a balance in service and faith. Yes, we ought to have a balance in our discussions.

PART IV

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Ancient science regarded the earth as the center of the universe, and the sky as a kind of inverted bowl containing all space.

Religious teaching, having no other concept, adjusted itself around this one and interpreted it as a kind of symbol of man's position in creation.

Copernicus upset this hypothesis by declaring that the earth was not the center of the universe, but was an insignificant planet in one of many worlds.

Not a few who delight in picturing the earth as a speck of dust flying through space find it difficult to discover any significance in human affairs.

—*Sister M. John Francis, C. S. C.*

CHAPTER XI

SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND PERSONALITY

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, "Thou must,"
The Youth replies, "I can."

—*Emerson.*

He most lives who thinks most,
Feels the noblest, acts the best.

—*Philip James Bailey.*

The boys were laughing about a masquerade party which all of them had attended the previous evening. The Doctor overheard them as they came down the walk.

"You were a 'hot sketch,' Fred. You made up well as an old college professor."

"Why, I didn't even know George. He acted more like a clown than I've ever suspected."

Doctor: Come on in. So you were putting on masks last night like the Greeks of old and acting varying rôles as on a stage.

George: Now we'll try to be budding Greek thinkers.

Doctor: This idea of wearing masks goes back to the day of the Greek drama. Even when not wearing

a mask, did you ever catch yourself, perhaps in your imagination, acting the rôle of the captain of the team, the best dancer at the party, or presenting a talk in the club meeting?

Henry: Plenty of times. Every now and then I look ten years ahead and picture myself as an author, a missionary, or a great statesman.

Doctor: This angle of our experience gives us one of the best clues to the underlying nature of personality.

Fred: Personality! I've heard that word so much. Some times personality is called "it," then again, books speak of personailty as a "mystic psychic essence."

Doctor: In our discussion we will speak of personality as the rôle which an individual plays in his daily activities and group life, very much as I have mentioned in the Greek drama, or you recall at the masquerade party. When these rôles are of a superior nature, we speak of a boy as a leader in camp, a "star" in athletics, a scholar in school, or a success in his work. All of you play several such rôles. At other times, an individual may get a rating from the group, or some member of the group, which defines his personality as inferior.

Henry: Around school they are always trying to run a person down by calling him a pest, bookworm, sissy, bum, bore, smart aleck, butt-insky, or a wiseheimer.

Clyde: Many of the teachers get a nickname, too.

Doctor: You've got the idea. When we call a person a gambler, a "pansy," or a politician, we are defining his personality. We are stating the position which he holds in the eyes of a group, or fails to have. It is this social status which makes him a person—a personality. Each one of us becomes aware of our personality, or our position in the group, through invitations to parties, being chosen last for the team, or when elected to some office.

Henry: And through the ridicule or praise we get.

Doctor: Let me read this letter, for it illustrates in the language of a boy, how he comes to have a personality: "The first year at Central High I decided to try out for football. I was small of stature and the Coach didn't even see me. After that I crawled a little deeper into my hole. I could feel myself slipping from my place of grammar school leadership. The year following, I made the track team, but it wasn't until I was a senior that I won a place on the football team. In one of the biggest games of the year, I was benched. The coach had lost confidence in me. During the third quarter, one of the backfield men got knocked out and we were on the short end of the score. The coach was reluctant about sending me in, but there was nothing else to do. It was nearing the end of the game when we decided to attempt a place-kick. The ball was slippery and the snap-back was wild. I was kneeling to receive the ball. The fullback caught the ball, tossed it to me and told me to run. I scored a touchdown. It was plain luck, but it served its purpose. I got my regular position

back. Soon after I was pledged to a fraternity in the school, and I became very popular with the teachers, the girls, and the fellows."

Fred: That sounds like a dime novel, but it may be true.

Doctor: I am willing to admit that much of it may be imaginary, but, you note that he changed from a leader in grammar school to a retiring personality in his first year at high school. Then, as if by chance, his personality was transformed into a popular athlete of the school. If you consider the total background of the school as a theatre stage with this boy as an actor on it, then you might notice how he straightens up, assumes an air of importance, talks with a new confidence, and tries, as best he can, to act out the rôle which he is playing, or to change it.

Henry: I had something of that same experience when I was asked to give an oration on the Lincoln Birthday program, but it didn't go to my head. I just noticed people treated me differently.

Doctor: Yes, every boy's life is made up of various experiences, different in detail, of course, but quite as significant in determining his personality. What do we mean when we talk of an educated person?

Clyde: Do you mean the book learning kind? I know plenty of people who go to school, even to college, but they don't seem to be educated.

Doctor: O. K., schooling isn't enough. A person must be able to use his knowledge. He must be able to cope with the ordinary events of life in an intelligent manner. You may recall that Lincoln was an

educated man, yet his schooling was most limited.

Fred: Still, a college education should help.

Doctor: It helps if a person is better prepared to determine what to do about our political situation in this country, how to solve our economic disturbances, and problems like that. If we were educated, we would know what to do about our personal and civic problems.

George: If that's the case, I don't know so very many educated persons. Most of the people I talk with are confused, uncertain, or indifferent.

Doctor: There is another aspect of education which must not be overlooked. We talk of it as culture, or a broad education. For instance, a person may be an educated farmer. He would be able to deal with the problems related to his vocation, but he might know little, and care less, about government, art, foreign peoples, and things not directly related to his work. In contrast to this is the person who earns his living as a doctor, but he lives in many and varied realms through his reading, or he appreciates other people and various viewpoints due to his opportunity to travel. When he travels, the trip is not a hurried jaunt, but an effort to understand other peoples and races.

Fred: I suppose we might say that science stimulates the kind of education we first mentioned, and religion encourages this cultural emphasis.

Doctor: I'd have to think about that point a little. Let us see what a scientific education does to our personality.

Fred: Science makes us more successful doctors, farmers, and engineers.

George: Our geography teacher has said a good many times that a person who studies science discovers that the universe does not run according to the whims and wishes of man, or God. This teacher points out that I may want to read at night, but it doesn't do much good to kick the floor, or cry. I must find a candle, or invent a lamp.

Doctor: Let me add this point: A child expects the world to move according to its personal desires. Otherwise, the child has a temper tantrum. But adults, scientifically trained adults, adjust themselves, and try to work out situations as they arise. They gather facts, look at things critically, and try to make the most of it, when things don't go their way. This is the attitude of an educated adult, in contrast to the child.

Henry: There are times when I think these discussions have ruined my religion. They have encouraged me to doubt much that I was positive about before. I am opposed, even yet, to the tendency of science to make people blatant little stone-throwers at religion, or our present institutions.

Doctor: Perhaps science is to blame for making the purpose of the universe uncertain. We don't know where we are going. As a result, many personalities are drifting. They don't know what life is all about and do not seem to care. Science has supplied such a vast amount of knowledge that the average man is baffled, even if he has gone to college. I'm not against

science, but there is much to be said in caution about it.

Henry: I can see that a scientific education has some far-reaching effects on the personality of a student. Worst of all, in its extreme form, it is producing an unmoral generation. This pragmatic approach to life, as you call it, causes morals to be shifting and changing. No one knows what is right.

Doctor: What does religion do to our personalities?

Henry: It tells the story of an ideal personality. It pleads with us to follow that personality. Even when I fall short of this ideal personality, Jesus is ready to forgive and help me to improve. That's what religion does!

Fred: Don't forget, either, that religion, without a large portion of humor, leaves a person pious, narrow-minded, bothersome, and the kind of personality that is disliked.

George: You know, most people seek the easy way of life. It seems natural. We are inclined to be lazy, selfish, and to follow the path of least resistance. As a result, we become cynics regarding social progress. We assume the attitude of "why try," or "nothing can be done about it," in the face of personal problems and community difficulties. I've learned that in every dark period in human history, religion has supplied the hope and faith for a new day. True enough, there are some religious leaders who say that nothing can be done until the millennium, and others are irrational and visionary, but through it all religion

has encouraged people to labor for a better day. Religion has supplied the prophets of the world.

Clyde: There was a time when I wasn't so sure about the value and the need of religion, but I've changed my mind a lot since I joined this discussion group.

Doctor: Our discussion points out that science and religion make their own positive and negative contributions to the growth of personality. Religious education emphasizes high ideals, worthy goals, and social purposes. Scientific education teaches "how" best to attain these ideals and goals. Religion inspires a person and reminds him that he can succeed with the power of God in his life. Science helps him to control the forces of life in order that he may achieve success in what he undertakes.

Other points could be added, but let me summarize our discussion by saying that life is worthwhile when a person has a part to play, a rôle to act in the daily drama. This gives to the person a sense of mission in the world—a feeling of destiny. True enough, a person may make a mistake in formulating his life purpose, but this is not as bad as to have none. In time he may discover his error, if he is open minded. Be that as it may, folks live and work best when life is seen and felt to be of immeasurable worth. Life should mean a chance for every person to create something of value in the interest of humanity. Under such circumstances, individuals work with love and joy in their lives, for their lives are in harmony with God.

George: Are there some books which a person can read on how personality grows?

Doctor: You are learning every day. You belong to groups of young people, to a home, and to a community. Each of these groups has a worthy purpose. You can seek to have a distinct place in each of these wholesome groups. As you live for the welfare of these groups—at school, church, or in the community—your personality keeps growing.

George: Is it as simple as that?

Doctor: You can enlarge your personality by reading and travel, until it embraces all humanity.

George: All you say is fine, but one has to stand some ridicule to belong to groups with high ideals. Even within a group, if I differ from them, I feel considerable disapproval.

Doctor: Of course, a person does not have to be a freak, or queer. He does not need to be a non-conformist and always at odds with groups. On the other hand, there is a need for a generation of young people to rise up and fight for the right to be different. Why should every person fit into a common mold, conform to the accepted ideas, and follow the crowd in everything? We need a generation of independent young thinkers, who are not afraid to be different.

Clyde: Are there groups that encourage their members to express differences in that manner?

Fred: Our Hi-Y Club has been trying to do that. The minority may be shouted down, but we try to give every view some chance. Furthermore, we don't force

everyone to agree on a common conclusion. Frequently, we don't state any conclusion.

George: My brother belongs to a college group like this. I don't know the name of it, but he speaks of it as a fellowship-group which is on a quest.

Doctor: Your illustrations are good. I imagine these groups are religious in purpose, and at the same time, they seek any contributions which science may have to offer in the solution of their problems. Such groups develop the personality of their members, and they contribute to social progress, too.

CHAPTER XII

SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND CIVILIZATION

The truest test of civilization is not the census,
Not the size of the cities, nor the crops;
No, but the kind of men the country turns out.

—*Emerson.*

Culture passes through a fourfold cycle of Youth,
Growth, Maturity, and Decay; or, every culture has
a Springtime, a Summer, an Autumn, and a Winter.

—*Oswald Spengler.*

The crest and crowning of all good,
Life's final star is brotherhood.

—*Markham.*

Early one Saturday, when the weather was mild, the four boys and the Doctor carried out their plan of a Travel Tour via auto to the city. To make a list of the places they passed or visited throughout the two-day excursion would afford a rather complete panorama of modern city life. They saw the homes of the poor and the rich—the gold coast, slum areas, apartment houses, congested districts, and suburbs. They inspected industry, commerce, and business, as revealed at the Board of Trade, the Ghetto, by the chain stores, steel mills, factory areas, and great railway yards. In the same manner, the group spent a

little time in visiting recreation centers—cheap movie houses, amusement parks, palace theatres, and athletic fields. Finally, they included in their survey the art museum, the library, the natural history museum, and certain parks.

Henry: It makes me sick to think of what we saw to-day. It's terrible the way we moderns live! Everyone lives at too high a tension.

Clyde: Why be such a pessimist? If you sleep well to-night, you'll feel better to-morrow.

George: Boy, I think there are some wonderful places in the city. I'm going back to visit a few of the museums and industries.

Doctor: Why not leave our discussion until to-morrow at the regular time?

Clyde: Suits me fine!

Henry: I'll be there!

Clyde and Henry continued arguing most of the way home, and they were in conflict over modern civilization even the next day. The Doctor tried to come to the rescue.

Doctor: Like the term "personality," we find that "civilization" is one of those vagaries which teachers like to talk about because it has five syllables, but it is hard to explain. I might say that civilization has much the same relation to a nation, or a race of people, which personality has to an individual. That is, a nation or a race plays a rôle in the history of the world through its contributions to government, art,

education, industry, customs, and beliefs. These expressions of group-life give something of the same characteristics to a race, or a nation, that personal activities give to an individual. Thus, we might say, civilization is the personality of the larger group.

Henry: I've heard the United States mentioned as "The Gold Beast."

George: Others call our civilization "The Machine Age," or Fred would call it "The Scientific Age."

Doctor: Why do you suppose these names have been applied to our collective life? Aren't they rather extreme?

Henry: That's simple. Everywhere we went yesterday, we saw the scramble for money. Profits, dollars, luxurious display on one hand, and poverty, suffering, and ignorance on the other.

Fred: I guess it is ignorance on both sides.

George: You're a little extreme in your views. We saw both good and bad. I'd call our civilization "The Machine Age," for the city came into being because of the machine.

Fred: Oh, you're a Technocrat.

Doctor: It may be just as well to mention where our civilization is at fault, and some of its good points, as well.

Clyde: I'd say that the machine has given leisure to more people than ever before. Working hours, for the average laborer, have been reduced twenty per cent and his wages have been doubled in the past fifty

years. The Technocrats are talking about shorter working hours and better working conditions.

Fred: Is he talking about the present economic depression?

Doctor: Of course, the period of maladjustment we have experienced is important, but history points out that a leisure class is essential to creative thinking. In the past, those people attained the highest level of civilization who had the free time and sufficient wealth to achieve results. In Greece, this was made possible by slaves. In this country, we have machines as our slaves.

Henry: And, with what results? What activities engage those who are economically free? I don't see how prize fights, dog races, and debauchery will produce a worthy civilization any more than chariot races and bull fights did in ancient Rome.

Doctor: All you are saying is that we do not know how to use our leisure time. But we have the leisure. And we have a wider distribution of wealth than ever before in the history of the world, in spite of the recent depression. Opportunities of every kind are open to the mass of young people to-day, while in Imperial Rome the opportunities were limited to a very few people.

George: It looks to me as though more of this wealth and leisure is being used in the advancement of art, literature, education, and human welfare than ever before. There is more progress to be made, but we are not doing so badly.

Henry: If you are for this machine age, just stop

to consider what machines did in the last war. The next war will destroy our civilization, if we keep on.

Fred: I haven't said much so far, but it looks to me as though you were only partially right. You are talking of a half truth. Science and machines do manufacture machine guns and submarines, but remember that automobiles, telephones, farm machinery, railroads, and ten times as many helpful things are produced, as the harmful ones you have been discussing.

Clyde: As I look at it, machines have done more to free mankind and to inspire people than to enslave them. Factory work is no more drudgery than hoeing corn twelve hours a day in the hot sun, and think of the hard labor which machines have eliminated.

George: A lot you know about work in a factory or on a farm. The question is, "Are we the masters of the machines we have created?"

Henry: I will admit that the mass of people have more of the comforts of life than formerly, but has this improved their ideals and characters?

Fred: Certainly science and machines, working together, have solved that great problem of food supply—our old friend Malthus was badly disturbed about that difficulty. But machine production has about ruined the opportunities of young people for a job.

George: You would be thinking of your stomach as of most importance.

Henry: That's not the worst of it, but it proves that we exalt the material over the spiritual. Science and machines do this to our civilization.

Doctor: Fred, as the "scientist" in our group, would admit, without a doubt, that science talks in material terms, and about "things." However, he would insist that science has inspired mankind with some visions and hopes of a very real nature, more so than prior to our present scientific period. Fred might go on to say that this entire change in emphasis from individual salvation to the salvation of humanity is one of the distinctive characteristics of our day, and science is making it a reality.

Fred: We can't stop the advancing machines, anyway, so why waste our time? Even Gandhi could not turn folks back to the old methods of spinning. Machinery is here, we'll have more machines, faster machines, and more complicated ones in the future. There's no doubt about that. We might as well become Technocrats.

Doctor: It may be not so bad, either, if the Technocrats can safeguard human interests and personality. We must learn to master machines, rather than become slaves to them. A person's body is a machine, and we marvel at it. Every budding leaf on the trees outside is a little machine manufacturing starch. The universe is something of a great cosmic machine. It may be that our machine civilization is more in harmony with nature than we realize.

The energy which drives all our machines may be said to be heaven-born. Remember that Benjamin Franklin drew this celestial fire and energy from above in the form of electricity, and coal, or gas, is stored solar power. Thousands of years have passed

waiting for men to learn from nature the use of machines, and their importance. As yet, we have not learned our lesson any too well. What we need to discover is how to use this heaven-born power for the good of all humanity.

Henry: Often I am perplexed because of the decay of all civilizations in the past. Why must the glory of Athens remain as history, or in a museum? I fear that we in this country are building a civilization, a house, so to speak, only to have some future civilization, discover that it was builded on sand. Will another war, a pestilence, or some other catastrophe ruin and consume our own civilization? Lots of times I puzzle over questions like this. I think that these civilizations have passed, and our own will collapse, because religion has been let out. Religion alone will save our civilization.

Doctor: It may be that the very purpose of every civilization is to grow, flourish, and die, when it has outlived its period of usefulness, rather than struggle to preserve itself long after its virility is gone. Perhaps, civilization is like the flowers that die each autumn, and grow up anew each spring. Young people should help to produce this change. "The unfortunate thing," remarks President Glenn Frank of the University of Wisconsin, "is that we send our sons and daughters to school so that, given the advantages of an education, they will build a better social order than the one we have. And yet, the majority of them come out of our schools inflexibly committed to American civilization as it is, unquestioning defenders of

the *status quo*, rather than questioning pioneers." We are apt to be easily satisfied with things as they are.

Clyde: Does that mean that each generation should actually work for the downfall of the civilization of its day?

George: That would be wasteful and silly.

Fred: It is well for us to remember that the human race, only twelve thousand years away from the stone age, already flies, dives under the sea, has conquered slavery, cannibalism and the problems of production. What we need is more science, rather than less. That alone will save our civilization, and safeguard it from becoming archaic.

Clyde: In the past only a few people had a chance to share in the achievements of progress. To-day, the great mass of people live on a higher level of existence and have greater advantages.

Doctor: Just what do you have in mind?

Clyde: I know a college student who spent last summer in the backward countries of Europe. He told me that certain countries measure their civilization in terms of art, literature, music, and other cultural advancement, even though only a few share in them. In the United States, on the contrary, we measure our civilization by the wide-spread advantages which the masses enjoy. We value things which make it possible for the common people to live with ease, possess an automobile, and to get more of an education.

The point is this: Europe seeks culture and refinement of an aristocratic nature. It places the emphasis

on quality, even if only a few can enjoy or share in it. In this country, we are democratic, in that we have emphasized quantity production and distribution of that which is worth while.

Doctor: However, with education so common in this country, what evidence is there that creative thinking is to be found among young people, say of college intelligence?

Clyde: You mustn't be too hard on the present generation. We're trying our best with the muddled situation which your generation has passed on to us.

George: There are times when I think that the philosophy of the Italian workman about fits us. He remarked, "I digga da ditch to getta da mon, to buya da bread, to getta da strength, to digga da ditch." That's the trouble with life to-day. It's one grand merry-go-round. Life is like a string of empty box cars. They are moving hither and yon swiftly, but where are they going? What is the use of going faster in this machine age, if there is nothing to do when we get there, but hurry back? What is the use of the radio, if there is little to say? This emphasis on quality is more important than speed, or material prosperity.

Fred: Our civilization differs from all others largely because of the importance of scientific thinking to-day. That is why I say the hope of the future lies in using scientific methods and techniques. This is one of the big arguments of the Technocrats.

Henry: We will use science. We can't help it.

But it is religion which will save our civilization, not science.

Doctor: The relation of religion and science to the future of our civilization has been stated by Herbert Alden Youtz, as follows: "The surface nature of our dealing with life is a fact that does not admit of challenge. Our civilization is clever and brilliant, but it is not profound. We excel in the description of life (due to the nature of scientific methods)* but not in its deeper understanding. Our very philosophies are becoming superficially descriptive. We exhibit a growing distrust in the ability of the higher capacities of our understanding to deal with facts not completely amenable to the methods of natural science. 'Is it scientific' is our supreme test. Our interests betray the surface character of our living. We are more interested in things, rather than the meanings of life about us. We have a passion for what we call the practical and the concrete. Making a living constitutes our idea of 'happiness' and the end of our existence.

"In this brilliant shallow civilization, how little living and thinking is done under the spell of a great religious experience, face to face with the great spiritual issues and profoundly moral concerns. These great realities take second place among us. Harnessing the Niagara Falls is a greater feat, and a greater service for civilization according to modern standards than moral self-mastery. The wonder of the radio

* Not in the original quotation.

broadcasting impresses us more than the authentic communication with the Source of our Being. Our civilization has eyes to see and to honor men of vast material wealth, but it is blind to men and women among us of moral personality. . . . The spiritual is despised and rejected of men."

Fred: That is a rather negative attack on our modern civilization. Has religion any positive contributions to make?

Doctor: Let me read this: "It is well to remember that, had it not been for religion and its underlying faith that the universe and its power could be controlled, there would not have been any civilization to frustrate. . . . Religion was the boot-strap by which man raised himself out of savagery. Or, it was the bank of reeds to which man clung as often as the dark waters of fear threatened to flood over him. In a very real sense, it was his salvation. . . . It was the salvation of society, too. Not merely did religion make it possible for one man to live by himself, but even more did it make it possible for two men to live together. . . . Ceremonies at birth, puberty, marriage, and death were the things that bound those clansmen into a compact group. The same was true of annual festivals. And thus, by and with religion, the living together of men was made possible.

"More than that: By and with religion the living together of men was made not merely possible, but also desirable. Religion clothed and adorned the cold nakedness of primitive existence with shreds and patches of beauty. All that grace and color which

transmutes more existence into life—in a word, all art—may truly be said to have arisen out of religion. Sculpture had its origin in idol-making, architecture in temple-building, poetry in prayer-writing, music in psalm-singing, drama in legend-telling, and dancing in the seasonal worship of the gods.”

Henry: Things don't look so dark after all. It looks to me as though we were living in the greatest period in history.

Fred: Has there been any other period in history when people were in such confusion and flux, as at present?

Doctor: You should study the period just before feudalism emerged. Cultural and moral ideals suffered a panic about that time, but things came out all right. In that day no one could predict what was to happen, and we are about in the same dilemma now.

George: Do you suppose it will be some form of socialism?

Henry: I hope it is nothing as radical as that.

Doctor: This would make a good subject for discussion later on. Our Secretary should make a note of it.

Clyde: I hope I live long enough to see what happens.

Doctor: As a summary to our discussion I might say that August Comte, the founder of sociology, suggested three factors as clues to human welfare, namely, love, order, and progress. From the point of view which we have been considering, love would stimulate mankind to evaluate every phase of life in

terms of the human factor. This is the contribution and responsibility of religion. Order is mathematical and scientific in nature. It systemizes, makes for efficiency, and aids in accurate thinking. But it abounds in evils, when found too long in isolation of the human factor. Likewise, love has its weaknesses, when carried to extremes—if it functions apart from intelligence. What we need is a reasonable combination of love and order, science and religion, if we are to make progress. If this balance is possible, science and religion working together can give our civilization more of a chance to survive than any civilization in the past, for it will keep it growing in a healthy manner.

Henry: You fellows always argue me down. I thought our civilization was going on the rocks, when we started our discussion.

Fred: Frequently, I arrive at a different viewpoint after our discussions, but there's nothing wrong in that.

Doctor: Your remarks are good evidence that you are growing mentally in your outlook, and I hope spiritually in your sense of values. There is nothing to be worried about in healthy mental growth, and civilization must keep growing, too.

CHAPTER XIII

TOWARD PHILOSOPHY: BEATEN PATHWAYS

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free.

—*John 8:32.*

We must be free, if we are to know the truth.

—*Bergson.*

Ignorance is the curse of God.

—*Congressional Library.*

It was one of those hot Spring afternoons when the streaming sunshine draws people out-of-doors. On this particular day it seemed as though the session was doomed to break up, until George drove up with the family auto and suggested a swim. In less than an hour they were out to the lake prepared to enjoy themselves. After a few dives they stretched out on the pier to get in training for a good tan. In the case of Clyde, it turned out to be mostly sunburn, in spite of the well wishing remarks of the other boys.

Doctor: Do you see those Spring Beauties over there in that open wooded spot?

Fred: Sure thing, did you think we were blind?

Doctor: And, do you see the creek, those trees, and the farm house in the distance?

George: Certainly! Why do you ask?

Doctor: Well, 2300 years ago, Democritus, and other philosophers, contended that objects exist only as ideas in the mind. There is no sound to deaf ears, and no blue sky to one who has been blind since childhood, according to these thinkers. The purple color is not in those violets you see, but an idea in your mind. This viewpoint is known as *idealism*, because ideas in the mind are made basic to thinking.

Fred: If it's all in the mind, then the Christian Scientists must be right.

Doctor: You raise a subject which would require a good deal more study and discussion than we can give this afternoon. However, we can put that down as one of our problems for further investigation. To go on with the point I had mentioned, you have heard people ask at times, "What's your idea?" By this they mean, what is your idea of China, evolution, jazz, war, or miracles. Every person seems to construct a universe of some kind in his mind which is made up of his personal ideas about objects, like people, stars, home, and what not.

Before we go on, let me clear up two points. First, *idealism*, in this sense, should not be confused with the term as used in ethics. In the latter sense, the word ideal means goal, while here we are speaking of ideal as synonymous with *idea*, or idea-ism. Second, *idealism* does not disprove the existence of matter, as Berkeley and Hume thought. Idealism grants that matter exists in some form, but that form is known to us mainly through our ideas.

Fred: I've heard idealism called the child's philosophy because children are imaginers. Their experiences are too limited for them to check up on the real facts.

George: Education helps us to arrive nearer and nearer the true idea about things, doesn't it? That is, if I am educated about Mexico, my ideas about that country and its people are nearer correct.

Doctor: Of course, education has other tasks, too, but you have a good point. Now, let's see how many of you are Idealists.

Fred: I'm not sure. It sounds true enough, but I've got to think about it a little more.

Doctor: While you are thinking let me go on and say that in contrast to the Idealists, there are the *Realists*, who say that the flowers, the stream, the stars are there, even when they are not in your mind. If no mind perceives the trees, still they will bud, flower, and later die. The stars in the sky are there and the telescope did not create them. When we leave this lake, it will not cease to exist. Furthermore, we can deal with this tree and make it into firewood, but we cannot do so with just the idea of a tree. Realists say that ideas are true because they exist in the material world. In its most extreme form, when life is interpreted as things, this viewpoint is spoken of as *Materialism*.

Fred: Realism seems to be more like the way I look at life. I am not as much of a Materialist as I used to think I was.

Clyde: Every day I am impressed with the error

in people's minds. They don't see things straight, I guess.

Doctor: Our senses do not always report things to us correctly. For instance, when I put this straight stick into the water, it looks bent from this angle. This is called the bent-stick experiment.

Henry: I am not willing to give up this theory of Idealism so readily. Is it wrong for me to think of the world as my impression of it? Certainly, I live, plan, and act as though my ideas, at any one time, are true. What else can we do but construct a world out of our own ideas?

Doctor: There is no reason why you should not be free to follow your own ideas. That is all you can do. But, don't be blind, as we have said before, and refuse to correct your ideas from time to time. Certainly, your mind gives meaning to all the objects about you. For instance, the idea "church" has a different meaning and value to each one of us. At the same time, there is a source back of all the ideas which exist in your mind. Certain objects really do exist, and Realism is interested in the cause, or what is back of these ideas. Everything is real, so they say, when it is reported similarly by several different people. Some philosophers say that Idealists confuse the meaning with the existence of things.

Henry: I don't want to cut off this discussion, but my grandfather never had any highbrow ideas like this. He couldn't even write his name, yet he was a successful farmer.

Doctor: You raise a good point, Henry. Many

people are like your grandfather, at least in principle. Even those who go to school, live, in the main, by a "rule of thumbs." To them, things are true because of their personal experiences. They ask "if a thing works," or "is it practical?" These are the tests of truth to them. From their experience they retain what is useful, that which is expedient, or take up what is promising. We call such people *Pragmatists*.

Clyde: Most of the high school fellows I hang around with are like that. They argue back and forth like clowns on the basis of one or two experiences. They are so cock-sure.

Doctor: Pragmatists are the least dogmatic of the philosophers, I believe. They keep changing their position constantly with each new experience. They don't have a very set code of morals, or positive views on political questions.

Fred: That's why I'm in favor of science. Get the facts. That's my idea of how to arrive at truth, even if it does make truth relative, instead of static.

Doctor: But, don't be too hard on these Pragmatists and Idealists. There is much to be said in their favor. According to our personal experience, the world seems to be round and does not appear to be moving, as science teaches. Then, too, there is something in the nature of many people which resists the evolutionary theory of man's origin, because of its teaching regarding his relationship with lower animals. Furthermore, the fact that water quenches thirst was a known truth, long before the discovery of the chemical content of water. So, you see, for

many generations people have had to learn quite largely from experience.

Fred: I'll admit that experience is a good teacher. Science favors the study of experiences. But, the trained botanist and forester are more needed and of greater value, than the experienced woodsman.

Doctor: You use the word "trained" in speaking of the scientist. The botanist sees what the ordinary man walks over. His mind is trained to know what to see and to report. This thing you call "getting the facts" usually turns out to be a difficult task. It requires especially trained men. These scientifically and empirically trained thinkers have helped us to get nearer the truth about the world in which we live, but they cannot "navigate" their ships out of sight of land. They must stick to what they see and to what the senses report. Of course, it checks and tests the facts which are reported.

Clyde: Aren't scientific thinkers inclined to be Realists? I've heard it said that they deal with facts which are within the empire of experience. That is why their thinking is called "empiricism."

Doctor: Their idea of truth is this: Does the idea in the mind correspond with the object outside, as reported by several different persons? You see, they shift their emphasis outside of the mind with things, rather than the mental picture, or the idea in the mind. Realism is objective, idealism subjective, as we say.

George: The Greek philosophers had a different

approach to truth, didn't they? You've mentioned it once before, but I can't remember it.

Doctor: There were Realists among the Greeks, but their foremost philosophers tried to locate some polar star, some static, ultimate truths, by which to steer their thinking. This group of men tried to arrive at knowledge and truth, not necessarily by perception, but from abstract reasoning. They did not disregard the facts they had, but they did not hesitate to follow logic in a speculative manner on any subject. They are called *Rationalists*, or *Intellectualists*. By Rationalism we do not mean free thought, or radical ideas of religion. It means that this group of thinkers would make reason supreme over the senses.

These philosophers took the position that there are truths which can be known prior to, and independent of, any experience. For instance, in 1871, Sir William Herschel discovered the planet Uranus. Its movement suggested to him some other force of gravitation, or some other planet drawing it. In 1864, by mathematical calculation, two university students, one in England, the other in France, figured out just where another planet must be. When the astronomers trained their telescopes on this spot in the heavens at a specified minute, there was Neptune—located by pure deduction. And to-day, we know how far away it is, what it is made of, and how much it weighs.

Likewise, Empedocles advanced a sort of theory of evolution 2000 years before Darwin, and a theory of atoms was explained before it was demonstrated by

the scientist, Dalton. Philosophy came before science, it seems.

Fred: But, the conclusions of philosophy were just guesses, and entirely mistaken in many cases.

Doctor: You fellows keep forcing me into a position of defending the Greek method of deductive logic, but I am not a bit embarrassed in the presence of you scientific thinkers. Remember, from a historical point of view, all fundamental knowledge has made a deductive descent. That is, in the field of science, astronomy came before mechanics, physics was developed prior to chemistry, and biology preceded psychology. Someone has suggested that science descended from the heavens. In the realm of art, this same thing is true. Architecture and the pyramids came before Greek sculpture, and after the classic Italian paintings, we find the music of the Middle Ages. Finally, in the realm of religion, great thinkers stated general principles of living, before we understood much about character and personality. So you see, early Greek philosophers reasoned by logic from certain general principles to the concrete.

There is much to be said in favor of these philosophers who aimed at truth apart from experience. They sought to follow an intellectual light, which was as stationary as the sun in the solar system. Truth, to them, was elevated above time and space. The square of five was always the same, then, and at all times. These thinkers would say that experience was the beginning of knowledge, and perhaps, the end, but

in between there are great areas for speculative thinking.

Clyde: Maybe that is why the greatest thinkers of all history were these Greek philosophers.

George: I don't like to admit that our great thinkers to-day are trailing behind the Greeks. Certainly, we know more, we are nearer the truth than the Greeks.

Doctor: Let me go a step further and say a word on the other side of the subject. I know a man who is a Rationalist. Recently, he argued with conclusive logic that the soldiers in the late World War would be opposed to another war. A week or so later, I saw an article in the newspaper stating that a scientific study of college men, ex-soldiers, pointed out that they were overwhelmingly in favor of war.

George: You can prove anything you want with facts.

Clyde: I know that by pure logic anyone would conclude that juvenile delinquency must be on the increase during this period of unemployment, but court reports indicate the contrary. Facts are confusing, and logic is perplexing.

Doctor: There is one more group of thinkers, I want to mention. They arrive at truth by hunches, or intuition. They might be called the *Mystics*. You recall that when you discover a truth, a feeling of satisfaction overcomes you. It is this feeling which seems to verify truth to a Mystic. Or, at times, as if by intuition, a person just hits upon a truth. These Mystics claim to enter the very inwardness of truth.

Henry: I have that feeling at times. When I do something that I know is right, an inner feeling verifies it. Are there Mystics in the world to-day? Do you know any?

Doctor: Oh yes, Mysticism is quite common. For instance, every genius defies scientific understanding. Then, too, there seems to be a mystic, creative spirit which is expressed in art, poetry, or music. Browning was as wise in his way about the world round about him as Darwin, and Shakespeare had as much insight as Bacon. We know that art arises before an intellectual knowledge of beauty, and we feel an intrinsic sense of rightness about certain conduct long before we have a scientific understanding of morals. Many well educated men are Mystics. We might say that they try to follow the trunk of the tree of knowledge down into the very sub-soil of intelligence. It is not what they see, nor the fruit which attracts them, but something deeper.

Clyde: Truth to many people is determined by what they read in a book, or what someone, who claims to be an authority, says is true.

George: To me truth is badly tangled up in something of a puzzle. There doesn't seem to be much hope of unraveling it, either.

Doctor: Oh, it isn't quite as bad as that, although it does demand some intelligence to discover it. Think how much nearer we are to the truth to-day than even the best minds 2000 years ago. And furthermore, most of the truth, which these early philosophers have uncovered, was on the basis of logic and speculation.

To-day, we stand on more solid ground. We have more facts with which to prove or test what we believe to be the truth.

Henry: Say, we've got to get the fire going, if we want to roast frankfurters for supper. We must have physical nourishment, as well as mental food and spiritual enlightenment. I am for the balanced life.

Clyde: Your mind seems to be in your stomach the greater portion of the time, according to my scientific calculations.

Doctor: How do you suppose each of us could figure out whether we were Idealists, Pragmatists, Mystics, or something else?

George: I'd like to discuss more in detail what difference it makes to me if I'm a Materialist or an Idealist.

Doctor: We are fairly familiar with the practical implications of science and religion. Consequently, we may find some answers to all of these questions if we discover the relationship between these schools of philosophy and science, or philosophy and religion.

Fred: That would be a good thing to discuss. Can we add it to our list of unsolved problems for future discussion?

CHAPTER XIV

TOWARD PHILOSOPHY: BLAZING YOUR OWN TRAIL

Man differs from the animals only by a little;
Most men throw that little away.

—*Confucius.*

It is the purpose of higher education to unsettle the
minds of young men,

To widen their horizon, to influence their intellects.

—*Robert Maynard Hutchins.*

Reason co-ordinates sensations into ideas,
Ideas into knowledge, knowledge into wisdom,
Purpose into personality, individuals into societies,
Societies into peace.

—*Will Durant.*

It was their last regular meeting before the Summer vacation. The many activities leading up to graduation from high school precluded anything additional. Then, too, their conversation suggested that each had plans for the Summer which meant that they might never be together again, or not for a long time. A peculiar silence pervaded the atmosphere. No one seemed to have much to say. The Doctor sensed the situation.

Doctor: So far so good, but where do we go from here in our thinking?

Henry: I'm startled at what has happened to my thinking this past Winter. Every day seems to be filled with intellectual romance and adventure. Each new glimpse of life thrills me. One day my mind is fixed upon Egyptian civilization, at another time I am fascinated, more than ever before, by the contributions of scientific thinking to our understanding of the universe. Or, I am considering some new revelation regarding religion.

George: Life is more filled with meaning, even when I am playing baseball, attending a movie, or listening to the radio.

Doctor: You are growing up, boys. You have "cut the apron strings," and now you are sailing out upon the stormy intellectual sea of life. Look out! There are rocks on either side and storms ahead. This ever enlarging mental outlook will be given greater perspective if you can go to college, or if you continue to read widely.

Fred: More and more our thinking must be done in international terms. Tariff, unemployment, and machine production have become world-wide problems.

George: I'd like to discuss international problems sometime, but international problems seem so far away. I'm not sure young people would be interested in such problems, though.

Fred: You're right! Most young people are not concerned with the basic problems of society, past or present. They are worried about their own self-advancement. They are interested mainly in their

own personal success. Why be bothered with the political, social, and industrial issues of society? You know the type of older high school boys and girls to whom I refer.

George: I don't agree with you. Come to our civics class and get some facts. I think you'll change your mind. You spend too much time in the laboratory or with your books.

Doctor: Don't become discouraged with young people. They will learn some day that their personal problems are part and parcel of the larger social fabric in society. At present their individual views may be isolated from the larger picture of life, but they will wake up before they are many years older.

George: Our minister says that young people must think for themselves. In a recent sermon he said, "There comes a day in the thinking of every growing child when he really ought to question some of the things he is told and some of the people who tell him things. Unless he does, not only will his own mind remain unenlightened, but there will be no chance of de-bunking the mind of the world.

"Here is a man who has no illusions. He knows that some of the things which he has been told as a boy he cannot, as a man, believe, for the simple reason that they are not true. He knows that a good deal of what passes as orthodoxy in theology, economics, politics, is but the hang-over of an uncritical age, or the deposit of a calculating selfishness—he knows that not everybody is honest, or kind. He is, that is to say, pretty well disillusioned. But is he soured? No!

Has he lost all faith in men, all hope of progress? No! He has come through his experience of disillusionment a little wiser, and perhaps a little sadder, but he still believes in honor, and that many men are honorable. He still believes in love, and that many men are kind. He still believes that there is in humanity enough of divinity to justify the hope of high and heroic achievements. And so, with a man's knowledge of life and the world, he moves into the future with a spirit of trust."

Clyde: That kind of talk appeals to me, but not all ministers would make such remarks.

Doctor: Let me tell you a German legend of an old monk, who one night, fell upon the words of the psalmist: "A thousand years are but a day in thy sight."

"What does this mean?" he asked himself. "If a millennium is equal to a day in the sight of the Creator, might it not be that man was created in six thousand years, not six days after the beginning of time? Could it not be that God spent six thousand years in the creation of man? Might not man have been something else before he was God's image? Might not evolution be true? I shall go into the forest and meditate."

He disappeared to the great forest, miles away. He meditated for one year—two years—five years—twenty years—a century, and still he could find no answer. The forest became dark, gloomy, and chilly; the monk became haggard and hungry. Still no conclusion at the end of his second century. He lingered

another hundred years in meditation. Each day he became more confused in his thought. The forest was now pitch dark, and a heavy storm beat the thinker away from his place of meditation. He returned to the monastery, weary and discouraged.

He walked slowly to his stall, still pondering. He saw a stranger in his place. When asked his name, the old monk replied, "Maurus of St. Bernhard in the reign of King Conrad."

The other monks gathered around. The cloister annals were brought. The Priest read, "A doubter disappeared one day from the cloister, and no one ever knew what became of him."

"I am the doubter," he said. "I sought truth and light from the Lord. I tried to reason out His mighty processes. For three hundred years I sought light, and He gave me darkness; I sought order, but He gave me chaos. He even blackened the forest and sent a rainstorm down to drive me away from speculation."

"A pity," said one monk, "that thou hast spent three hundred years in thought, and have accomplished nothing!"

"Nay, young brother, my meditation was not in vain. I return to you with one supreme message: 'Value the imperishable Word of the Lord at all times, and never try to fathom what He in His wisdom hath veiled from us!'"

Henry: I know certain people who would refuse to talk things over as we've been doing. They'd be afraid that it would wreck their faith.

Fred: As for me, I'm in favor of the point of view of Charles Darwin. He wrote in his diary: "From my early youth, I have had the strongest desire to understand or explain whatever I observed. As far as I can judge, I am not apt to follow blindly the lead of other men. I have steadily endeavored to keep my mind free, so as to give up any hypothesis, however much believed, as soon as the facts are shown to be opposed to it."

Doctor: For young people to chart their course in thinking between these two very difficult positions, namely, the sandy shoals of abiding faith in the teachings of the past, and the rocky cliffs of open-minded discovery, is not easy. In the first instance, they will have to face the constant attack of critics, while, on the other hand, they will come into conflict with the mental giant of uncertainty—an experience which almost tears their souls asunder.

Fred: But most young people are not interested in thinking. I'd say they just swing along and let things come or go as they will.

Doctor: You've been raising this point right along. You don't seem to have faith in the present generation. What battles must young people wage, if they would become thinkers?

Clyde: We've said a dozen times already that thinking is so apt to be dimmed and distorted. Why harp on this all the time? I'll admit it, but let's encourage young people to do the best they can with their limited intellectual ability. That's what you're doing, "wise boy," isn't it?

Fred: The big difficulty is that many young people are only interested in a good time and their own selfish advantage. It isn't popular to be a thinker. You are usually in the minority. Philosophers have always had to "buck the crowd."

George: Oh, you must be thinking of yourself, are you? There is another reason for your unpopularity. You're too critical!

Doctor: Ha! Ha! Let's have a fight. The human mind has difficulty in reasoning logically. That's true of Fred, too. Our thoughts are often the tools of our desires and our social habits. If we are anxious enough to believe a theory, we'll believe it, and find some reasons for believing it. Ask some manufacturers why they favor the tariff policy, and they'll tell you to raise wages, protect infant industries, or something like that, whereas the truth of the matter is, they desire to protect their industries for more profits. It is so easy to "fall in love" with pet ideas.

Clyde: And I know plenty of older folks who are as gullible as young people. They accept, without investigation, the viewpoints of daily newspapers, or some authority, regarding prohibition, the government of Russia, the church, labor unions, or the Negro problem. The trouble with most people is that they don't have any philosophy of life, or their philosophy is too narrow.

George: How do people come to have a philosophy of life, anyway?

Doctor: Let's see. Do you know of any person who is philosophical in his thinking?

Henry: What's the matter with Fred? His mind is working over-time every day.

Doctor: I wasn't referring to members of our own group, but Fred is a fair example of a thinker in embryo. Now, how did Fred get that way?

Clyde: By reading all sorts of wild books, I'd say.

Henry: Too much scientific study. Science has become almost divine in his estimation.

Fred: Well, if you want to know the truth, there was a big mental revolt in my life about a year ago. Philosophers are pioneers in the realm of thought, and as a young man, I have considerable of this pioneering spirit in me. I'm not as radical as I give you fellows to understand, but I don't follow along as blindly as I used to, either.

Doctor: It would be interesting to discover, if we could, how much of this painful awakening has been due to environment, and to what extent his philosophy is the result of inheritance—his mental capacity, temperament, or some physical handicap?

Fred: I'll admit it, I'm a chip off the old block. My father is inclined to be a thinker. However, I wouldn't say I inherited my views, or that my thinking is the product of biological inheritance. It is the result of living with him, and sticking my nose into some of his books. And do we argue!

Doctor: I can just imagine that Fred will want to join several groups like this next year, and for the rest of his life. That's probably true of the rest of you, too. If there aren't any groups you'll start them.

George: I wouldn't mind continuing this group

next year, but I suppose that is out of the question.

Doctor: To get back to Fred. While he has been growing up mentally, you will note further, that he has tried to develop, or organize his thinking, around a definite point of view.

Henry: You said it! He's scientific, materialistic, and radical. You can almost figure out in advance what he will say on any sort of problem.

Doctor: That is because he relates the fragments of his daily experience to this major scheme of life. Let's try it out. How would we expect him to think about unemployment?

Clyde: First crack out of the box he'd want to know the facts.

Henry: As the result of such a brainstorm, he'd begin getting critical of the government and capitalism, I suppose.

Doctor: I'm sure he would ask such questions as "Why do we have unemployment?" Or, "What can be done about unemployment?" Let's forget about Fred and state, if we can, the several ways people might consider such a grave problem as this.

Fred: Yes, don't pick on me all the time.

Clyde: There are plenty of people who are pessimists. As far as they are concerned, nothing can be done. They would contend that we have always had poverty and always will.

George: Some religious folks just won't admit the facts. They say things aren't so bad.

Fred: Other religious people contend that God has sent this period of hard times to punish this sinful

world, or they submit to these hardships, believing that they will be rewarded in the life after death.

Doctor: Then, of course, there are those who favor some more radical plan of economic reconstruction. They may advocate an adaptation of the Russian Five Year plan, some sort of Fascist regime, or Technocracy.

Henry: Most of us think things will work out all right, even though we cannot think through what is best.

Doctor: Of course, very few people go through all of these possibilities in their thinking, but this is the process which produces philosophical thinking.

Henry: Fred is a philosopher, true enough. He'd "know" the answer without going through all of this red-tape in his thinking. I'm sure he'd favor some wild socialistic scheme if he keeps on this way.

Doctor: When a person arrives at a set philosophy of life, isn't his thinking fully as biased, if not more so, than the average man on the street? These budding philosophers have reasoned out the problem and possess arguments based on facts. Even Fred may not be as open-minded as he claims.

There is something to be said in Fred's favor, however, because the philosophy he is weaving will have a tendency to make him put-things-in-their-place. When he reads a book, he will come to ask automatically, "Is the author a banker or a labor leader? What is the purpose of the book?" In this way he will size up and evaluate not only books, but movies, colleges, newspapers, and other experiences. Life will

become more unified, rather than just a grab-bag, or like a cafeteria counter. The thinking of a philosopher tends to be more consistent, instead of haphazard. And this mental outlook on life is open to all of you now that you have started.

Fred: That is what I meant when I said that many people make no effort to understand what is going on about them, and the relation of each segment to the sum total of life. They just live life as it comes along day after day. They don't have any philosophy of life. That's the trouble to-day.

George: On the other hand, I know plenty of intelligent young people who are given to observation, intellectual analysis, and to discovering the implications of their experiences. I don't think high school boys and girls are hopeless intellectually.

Doctor: The trouble is not with the young people, but rather because too much of life is presented to them after the fashion of the close-ups in the movie. The close-up was introduced in the movie, I suppose, because it appeals to the emotions of hate, joy, love, fear, or jealousy. This is made possible because all relationships are omitted, except in the imagination, or through suggestion. Too much of life to-day is like a close-up, where the relationships with the larger aspects of the issue are omitted. Consequently, we can't think in terms of life as a whole. Our minds are too small to grasp what is happening.

Henry: Why is it that we begin to wake up and do more thinking as we get to be older high school fellows?

Doctor: Partly, I suppose, because you are seventeen years old, rather than only ten. Your outlook and experiences are greater. However, much of the new thinking which begins during later adolescence is instigated by the changes which an individual makes in his social contacts and personal experiences. He may have been reared as a Republican, then he moves into a Socialist community. He may have been instructed in orthodox religious views, then he begins reading liberal, or antagonistic literature. As a boy he has been trained in Puritanical morals, which come into conflict with a social club he joins. His religious training may come into conflict with the scientific teachings at school. In each of these situations, a mental conflict is waged between the viewpoint of the childhood group, as against the new group. That is, every decision which he makes regarding education, a vocation, sexual problems, or religion, is reflected in its gravitation toward the viewpoint of some one group or another.

George: Oh, then a person doesn't think for himself? The groups of which he is a member determine his views of life, his attitudes, and his philosophy of life!

Doctor: That is the case more often than most people recognize. Usually, they are voicing the view of some group. Of course, every individual can influence the ideals and attitudes of his groups. Then, too, to join certain groups is the best way for an individual to spread his theories of life. This is why every community has religious sects, political parties,

organizations of labor and capital, cultural groups, and scores of associations and societies. Too often people desire such a standardization and conformity of views as to eliminate all but the groups to which they belong personally, or endorse. So you see, the philosophy of life which each one of us has may be the product of the attitudes fastened on us by the groups in which we have grown up.

George: But intellectual labor is tiresome to most of us. Even the Bible says, "Of the making of books there is no end, and much study is a weariness to the flesh."

Clyde: We should adopt that phrase for our motto.

Fred: I can understand why some people turn from intellectual endeavors to dances and palace movie houses, or never care about exercising their intellects. They want something new and thrilling. They don't want to think.

George: Even mental gymnastics may be overdone.

Doctor: I suppose we reason because we are forced to do so, even though some enjoy it. I suspect that reason originated in the Ice Age. It was bitter cold, so men tried to figure out how to cover up. The storms forced them to build a shelter. They grew hungry, so they used their brains to get food. Thus came fire, tools, and progress. Man came into his supremacy because of his mind, and with his mind he set out to master the world.

Henry: If mastering the world is his goal, man has a lot of mental work ahead of him.

Doctor: Students of prehistoric life tell us that in all probability the imposing monsters of the early geologic epochs, from the dinosaurs to the mastodons, failed to survive because their colossal bulk made it impossible for them to act promptly under the stimulus of peril. It is problems which cause us to pause and think. If we did not use our intelligence when we were hungry, we would starve. Or, if we found food, we would be in danger of gorging ourselves. If reason did not control our behavior, the problem of sex in society would threaten our civilization.

George: Someone has said, "If we reflect too long, we shall never accomplish anything." I'm for action!

Henry: I guess there is a place for both action and thinking, but reflection should come first.

Doctor: Both of you are wrong. It is best if thinking and action can work back and forth, rather than one getting too far ahead of the other. There is one more point I have to present.

Clyde: Let's have it.

Doctor: Science, religion, and philosophy all agree on the fact that we live in an orderly world. Order is at the basis of all life. When we act in an orderly way, reason must function. We should look upon the world, and life, as a system of orderly relations, discover what they are, and reason from cause to effect. In actual practice, we are both empirical and rational in our thinking. We start with some ideas, gather new facts, project a new viewpoint, test

it out, and keep on building. The degree of balance, or emphasis between Realism and Idealism will vary with the individual, depending on the situation and the condition of things. This should make for a balance in the personality of an individual person, and a corresponding balance in all issues affecting society.

Henry: These abstract ideas which we have been discussing have been fine, but I would like to get my feet on the ground. I'd like to see how science, religion, and philosophy apply to everyday problems.

George: I would too! What does all of this mean in relation to choosing a vocation?

Clyde: Or, choosing a wife?

Fred: I can think of a lot of problems, such as war, internationalism, or racial conflicts.

Doctor: Good enough! Each of you should talk with other young people, and college students who are home for their vacation, to discover what perplexing situations are bothering them. That is exactly what thoughtful men have been doing since the beginning of time.

Fred: Later we can start groups like we have had, or join such groups to discuss these problems.

Doctor: Exactly! But, as young people you must blaze your own trails with a look ahead now and then, to determine the trends of the time. This can be a great intellectual adventure, if young people make it a co-operative enterprise, rather than planning primarily for their own personal advancement.

SOURCE MATERIALS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

The original source of the ideas which have resulted in this book is not easy to trace. A unique combination of reading, sermons, conversations, and observations has produced them. However, the authors have tried to give credit wherever possible.

Many readers will desire to continue research on these subjects, so a working library of source materials is suggested herewith. In the main, the books suggested are of an introductory nature and should prove especially helpful to teen-age people.

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